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WHOM THE GODS LOVE.

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I.

MRS. FELLBRIDGE threw the last spadeful of earth on to her barrow with a sigh of relief. Picking up a trowel, she knelt to scrape the soil from the stone her spade-work had exposed.

It was a large, oblong stone, squared at the ends, cut away down each side at an angle, and there was some sort of carving on the face. 'An altar, sure enough. Now, what?' muttered Mrs. Fellbridge, scraping busily.

A mutilated inscription, rather roughly done, came to light. With her forefinger Mrs. Fellbridge traced out letters.

'Silvano Invict...P.lchr sim..
Pro Sal..Antig...i.....n..que'

Mrs. Fellbridge pushed away a curling wisp of hair, and sat back on her heels, surveying the altar with pleasure.

'Well, that's very nice,' she thought. 'To the invincible, most beautiful Silvanus; h'm. He was the wood-god. For the protection of—let me see—that might be Antigonus; yes, and somebody else. Very nice. But what on earth were the Romans doing here?'

Squatting among the earth and stones of the hollow she was digging to make a sunk garden, Mrs. Fellbridge twiddled the trowel between her palms, remembering scraps of archaeological lore her husband had taught her. Behind her the garden drowsed in the iridescent shimmer of a summer

afternoon ; bees rioted in the catmint, and the air was filled with their soft buzzing and the chatter of nesting birds. A little breeze, laden with the scent of woodruff, pinks and peonies, played in the untidy curls of her grey head, bared to the sun. Beyond the piled earth lay the wide expanse of the Fells, darkest green where the heather sprang fresh after the spring burning ; in the distance, fading into soft blue where the horizon merged with the gentle sky.

The little sunk garden was well under way ; spadeful by spadeful, by the strength of her own back and arms, she was making it to complete the perfection of her garden, after seven years of hard though loving care.

Seven years. So long, since Walter died, and left her to make the best of life alone. And not such a bad thing she'd made of it, thanks to the garden, to whose peace she had turned for comfort in her loneliness. Her beloved garden, which only needed this sunk rockery, the little lily pond fed by the spring there, to make it one of the loveliest in the county.

And now, this. Three feet down below the apparently unbroken surface of the fell, a Roman Altar ; to the 'most beautiful god' of the wild places. Perfect.

Stirred to further action, Mrs. Fellbridge leant forward and busied herself tidying up the loose soil. The trowel clinked on something hard, metallic. With eager, bony fingers she felt in the earth ; carefully, she prised it out. It was a small brooch, a fibula. Rubbing it gently with her fingers, colours appeared ; colours of faded, old enamel, blucey-green, rose red, a line of gold. . . .

' You want me ? ' asked a voice beside her.

Startled, Mrs. Fellbridge looked up. Sitting on a heap of earth was a charmingly impossible figure. The curly

gold head of a veritable cherub, set upon a delicious little white, child's body, which ended incongruously in the brown, hairy haunches and stiff, cloven-footed legs of a goat.

The Creature surveyed her with its head on one side, a half-wistful, half-rueful smile on its face.

'Good gracious. What are *you*?' exclaimed Mrs. Fellbridge. She still knelt on the warm earth, the fibula clasped in her left hand.

'It's entirely your own fault, you know; digging up my Altar and the Priest's brooch; so don't blame me,' said the cherub.

'Your Altar, indeed. Why, goodness me, child . . . you don't mean to say . . . ?'

The little creature scratched his neck absently with his hoof; Mrs. Fellbridge, watching, felt that it was an action she had always envied the four-footed beasts.

'I'm afraid so,' he replied apologetically. 'You've exposed the Altar, and picked up the brooch with your left hand. What could you expect?'

'Silvanus,' breathed Mrs. Fellbridge.

'Well, not exactly. You see, the man who made this temple was half Greek, half Brigantine; when the rest of the Legions departed, my Greek came away into the Picts' country with his family; and, when he found a safe place to live, naturally he wished to raise an altar to the god who had saved him in the wilderness. So he chose Silvanus; but, being half Greek, the fellow imagined the god as a sort of Pan.'

'I see,' said Mrs. Fellbridge cheerfully. 'So you're all imagination.'

'Not at all,' replied the Creature, with dignity. 'My august progenitor . . . '

'Your *what*?' queried Mrs. Fellbridge.

'I beg your pardon; my noble parent happened to be fairly free of responsibilities at the time; so he came over to Britain to answer the call, met a delightful British Oread up in the hills, and I'm the result.'

'Good gracious!' exclaimed Mrs. Fellbridge, vaguely feeling that she ought to disapprove.

'Not at all; a **MOST** respectable union,' grinned the cherubic one. His voice became reminiscent. 'Very happy we all were, too. No one bothered about us, in this out-of-the-way place. But times change.' He sighed, and nodded towards the altar.

'The Scots overthrew *that*,' he said. 'And after that, of course, no one remembered Silvanus. It's been rather lonely, the last few hundred years. On the whole, I'm glad you found it. It lets me out, you see. Thank you.'

Mrs. Fellbridge nodded dreamily. 'Not at all,' she murmured. Then, stirring restlessly, she smiled at the little figure. 'Well, that's that. I don't *really* believe in you, my lad; you see, I'm a Churchwoman.'

The little god smiled, and, jumping down from his pile of stones, came and stood beside Mrs. Fellbridge as she knelt by the Altar.

'Seeing's believing,' he whispered. Mrs. Fellbridge poked her trowel at him. At close quarters there was an unmistakable odour of goat.

'Not good enough. Must be a touch of the sun,' she said firmly. 'I ought not be digging without a hat.'

'Quite true,' agreed the other. 'Still, you can touch me. Try?' He held out a little hand ingratiatingly.

Half irritated with herself, Mrs. Fellbridge found herself clasping it in her firm, brown one. It was real enough. The smiling face under the golden hair pleaded with her.

' You can't send me back again. Not on a nice fine day like this. Go on, obey your natural instincts. You rather like me, don't you ? '

' Brat ! ' said Mrs. Fellbridge. But her voice quavered.

' You may call me Sill,' the little creature wheedled.

' Silly, yes, that's just what you are ; silly.'

' Then I shall stay,' he caroled blithely.

' But what on earth can I do with you ? ' Mrs. Fellbridge looked at the small person with a tinge of disapproval. ' I can't have you in the house with those feet ; I mean . . . '

' Oh, my legs ? Well, they are rather a trial ; but it's entirely hereditary, you know.'

Silvanus performed the neatest little hop-skip on the offending members, and twirled about. Mrs. Fellbridge felt a slight shock to see the impudent little goat's tail. She put out a hand to stop him, and it rested amid the curls of his golden head. There, almost concealed by the pretty hair, she suddenly noticed the rudiments of two tiny horns.

' Oh, get along with you,' exclaimed Mrs. Fellbridge, with an uprush of tenderness.

The little god grinned very humanly. ' You need not worry ; no one will see me. It was only your finding the Altar that made *you* lucky.'

' Lucky ! I don't know about that,' said Mrs. Fellbridge rather grimly. She looked at her watch. ' Dear me, tea-time. What on earth do you eat ? Or, don't you ? '

' Grapes ; honey ; fruit of the wild. Don't worry about me,' shrilled Silvanus, pirouetting merrily. ' Go and partake of your collation, Saviour of the gods ; I will be here when you want me.' And, like a puff of thistle-down on the wind, he had vanished.

Mrs. Fellbridge shook the earth from her skirt, smiling. ' What a funny idea,' she said to herself. And went in to tea.

II.

As she approached the french window, she saw the inner door of her drawing-room thrown open, and heard the maid announce : ‘The Rector and Mrs. Garside, madam.’

‘How nice to see you ; how d’ye do, Mrs. Garside ? This is pleasant,’ said Mrs. Fellbridge. ‘No, I can’t shake hands till I’ve washed ; gardening, as usual, you see. Isn’t it a heavenly day ? Do sit down, both of you. I won’t be long.’

‘Well, this is comfortable, to be sure,’ sighed the Rector, sinking into an easy chair, and mopping his warm face.

‘George,’ asked his wife, wrinkling her nose with some curiosity, ‘does Mrs. Fellbridge keep goats ?’

‘Goats ? What an idea.’

‘Well, to be sure, it is rather a funny idea for Mrs. Fellbridge,’ laughed Mrs. Garside. ‘But, you know, I’m sure I noticed something ; something very *like* the smell of goats.’

‘Pinks, my dear ; pinks,’ explained her husband, with a comprehensive wave of the hand to the bowls of those flowers, with which the old room was filled. Certainly, their scent was heavy on the air.

‘Why, of course ; how stupid of me ; that clovy smell. I was just saying,’ added Mrs. Garside, as her hostess returned from washing, ‘how very beautiful the pinks are.’

‘Mrs. Simkins ; yes, she’s very prolific,’ agreed Mrs. Fellbridge absently, busying herself with the tea-pot. ‘Sugar, Rector ?’

‘Two, please. My wife doesn’t take it,’ replied the Rector, drawing his chair nearer the table.

Mrs. Fellbridge passed the cups of tea to her guests, and sat down. The sunlight through the open french window

caught the silver in her pretty, untidy hair, and threw up the lines of her brown, comely face. She gazed out into the garden, her thoughts busy. Surreptitiously, she put a hand in her pocket. Wrapped in her handkerchief was something hard. Then the fibula, at least, was no dream.

'And so George and I thought it would be wonderful if you would let us have the garden for the Fête.'

Mrs. Garside's soft voice broke in on her meditations. Mrs. Fellbridge came back to reality with a start.

'The garden? Oh . . .'

'It is so lovely, Mrs. Fellbridge, and those poor mothers would so enjoy your beautiful flowers.'

Mrs. Fellbridge glanced out of the window again. Framed against the sunlight as with an aura of gold, Silvanus stood, peering in to the room from the top of the steps.

'Go away at once!' cried Mrs. Fellbridge. Silvanus, grinning, disappeared.

The Rector coughed nervously, and half rose.

'Oh, I don't mean you,' exclaimed Mrs. Fellbridge contritely. 'It was that . . . that chicken,' she ended lamely.

'Oh, was there a chicken? I didn't notice,' the Rector said mildly, sinking back into his chair. 'Well, now, about Saturday, the eleventh.'

'What? What about it?' Mrs. Fellbridge forced herself to concentrate on what her guests were asking.

'The Fête; for the Mothers' Union from Denestown,' Mr. Garside told her patiently. 'Their Vicar wrote and asked me if I would join him in arranging a country outing for them. Poor things, they don't often see the country, and with all those factories . . . Mrs. Garside and I thought we might combine it with the Sale of Work; the more the merrier, you know. So, if you would lend us the garden?'

Mrs. Fellbridge felt an unaccountable surge of distaste,

'The garden? Oh, I couldn't; I couldn't have such a crowd . . . you see, I'm busy making a sunk garden with a lily pond, down below the steps, and the place is in such a mess.'

'But we could run a nice wire netting across that end; and besides, the upper lawn is quite big enough, isn't it, Emily?'

'Perfect, dear; and such a view, too; and I do so love that copper-beech. George,' added Mrs. Garside, with a bright smile, 'I believe you have a roll of sheep-netting put away in the stable which would do beautifully.'

'Then that's settled,' the Rector beamed, rubbing his hands. 'I can't tell you how grateful we are, Mrs. Fellbridge. Saturday week. And when you see the faces of those poor mothers you'll feel well repaid.'

'Oh, but Rector . . .' Mrs. Fellbridge wanted to tell him that she disliked the whole idea intensely, but the innocent pleasure on his face disarmed her. Mrs. Garside, perhaps sensing her hesitation, broke in quickly.

'Indeed, it is kind of you, dear,' she exclaimed. 'But I always tell George, if we're in a difficulty, we've only to tell Mrs. Fellbridge, and it simplifies itself. I don't know what we'd do without you . . . but we mustn't even think of that, must we?'

In a dream, Mrs. Fellbridge watched them depart, waving to Mrs. Garside as the old Morris rounded the corner of the drive.

'Well, they've gone at last!' exclaimed Silvanus, appearing from behind an Austrian briar-bush, and capering gleefully on the grass border.

'Stop that at once; look at the marks you're making.' Mrs. Fellbridge was annoyed. Then, recollecting herself, she exclaimed, 'Nonsense, Dolly Fellbridge; you're mad.'

'Not mad at all. What did old Silenus-nose want ?'

'Silenus-nose ! You're a very rude little boy ; that was the Rector, and he's a martyr to indigestion, poor man.'

Silvanus laid a finger on his absurdly short nose, and winked. 'The local priest, was he ? They've changed since my day. Now, my particular Briton was a handsome fellow in a clean white toga.'

'Surplice. He only wears that in Church,' said Mrs. Fellbridge. She was absent-mindedly weeding the border.

'Come and see your Altar,' Silvanus invited her. Seeing the pucker of her brow, he took her unresisting hand, and led her down the garden.

'Mothers' Union indeed,' muttered Mrs. Fellbridge. She felt quite ruffled ; this was unlike her. She liked helping people.

Silvanus surveyed her frowning concentration thoughtfully. Tactfully, he wheedled out of her an explanation of the trouble. When, somewhat brusquely, she explained, rather thinking aloud, he nodded.

'I understand. A sort of Fertility Cult,' he observed. 'What fun. And what do you sacrifice ?'

'Sacrifice ? What are you talking about ? Oh, I see. No, Silly, we do not sacrifice on our altars ; and it is not at all what you think,' Mrs. Fellbridge reproved. But her brain repeated the phrase, 'Fertility Cult,' and something in her wanted to laugh.

'Not even your peace of mind ? I call that sacrifice.' Silvanus grinned. 'When did you say it was, this Festival ?'

'Saturday week ; the eleventh of June.'

Silvanus looked up at her moody face, and smiled broadly.

'Well, you may call it June the eleventh ; but doesn't the date suggest something to you ?'

She looked at him, puzzled. Scraps of forgotten classics hesitated on the brink of expression. Silvanus chuckled.

'Yes, I see you remember; the Matralia. Very appropriate.'

He was right, of course. Mrs. Fellbridge pondered. But what nonsense. These things didn't happen.

They had come to the lower garden.

'Look at that, and forget your British mothers,' said the small voice.

Mrs. Fellbridge raised her eyes, and gasped.

Gone were the heaps of earth, the untidy piled stones and débris. The Altar stood on a moss-grown plinth. Below it, the ground fell in a semicircle of wide shallow steps, cut in the rocky substratum of the hillside, to a small, clear, square pool, perhaps a foot deep. The sides were of beautifully fitted stone-work, over the edges of which harts'-tongue ferns drooped gracefully, dipping in the limpid water. Round the pool was a level paved walk, from which, at regular intervals, old, slender stone pillars, weather-beaten, twined with honeysuckle, rose to the drooping birch trees. The surplus water from the pool gurgled gently down a heather-hung channel to lose itself among the mosses of the fell beyond the garden.

Mrs. Fellbridge brushed a hand across her eyes, and looked again. It was a little Temple such as she had seen far off in Attica, in those long-gone days of wandering with Walter among the treasures of archaeological research.

She looked down. Standing meditatively, chewing a long grass, Silvanus the demi-god raised clear blue eyes to her face and smiled. 'But; but how?' whispered Mrs. Fellbridge. He waved a small hand carelessly.

'There are still a few People in the Hills,' he said.

The woman went down on her knees beside him, her arm

in its grey woollen sleeve lying across the bare shoulders of the little god. 'Dear God, don't mock me,' she cried softly, the prayer to her own familiar, reasonable God of the English rising spontaneously to her lips. The haunting beauty of this oddly substantial vision was almost more than she could bear. And she thought of her husband. Dear Walter, so sure of the permanence of the human spirit, the permeable quality of matter and time. How he would have loved this little shrine ! And she fancied she could hear his quiet voice discussing the ancient mysteries. A sense of peace rose in her heart.

'I am happy that you like it,' the cheerful treble of Silvanus broke in on her reverie. 'Now, don't kneel too long ; it's rather damp, and you know you ought to take care, with your rheumatism.'

III.

The next few days passed like a pleasant but muddled dream. They were days of languorous June sunshine and cool breezes off the Fells. Days broken by vaguely irritating interviews with her cook, who complained that the school-children must be stealing the ripe fruit, for the bushes were stripped and the garden littered with skins. The chauffeur-gardener, too, had a grievance that sheep were somehow getting in, though he could find no holes in the fences ; but there were the marks of their hooves all over, spoiling his paths and beds.

But these minor worries were easily offset by long dreamy hours when Mrs. Fellbridge experienced an unfamiliar sense of exhilaration, as if some inner and forgotten self, vigorous and joyous with youth, possessed her. Then longing for the beauty of the Roman temple guided her steps down to the lower garden. In vain she reasoned with herself that she

was the victim of illusion. The illusion persisted. The shrine remained obstinately real. She spent long, slow hours there alone, or with Silvanus, whose presence she had come to accept, a thing incredible but very sweet ; sitting idly contemplative, deeply satisfied. In these hours she was aware of two selves in her, one which ridiculed, afraid to accept the evidence of sight and touch ; one which knew, gladly, the beauty and the truth of it.

Fighting her belief, this other self found an unusual warmth in her heart for the little, mischievous creature with the face of an angel and the legs of a goat, to whom she owed this incredible happiness, whose very being her more rational side persistently discredited. He had an exasperating but intriguing habit of appearing out of nowhere ; he broke flowering branches off her favourite shrubs to fan her when it was hot, and stole the fruit from gooseberries and currants with cheerful unconcern. He was impudent and grave by turns, and he addressed her with a casual affection which both irritated and attracted her.

But chiefly, through these summer days, she was possessed by thoughts of Walter. Her husband had never seemed so near to her in all the years since his death. She was amazed by this thrilling sense of proximity, and felt in the secret depths of her being that he might appear at any moment. This inward happiness completely filled her.

And, all this time, she was busy with the arrangements for the Garden Fête. The Rector had invited Mrs. Gibb to open the Sale of Work. Helena and Charles Gibb were old friends. Charles had been Walter's Brigade Commander during the war, and, since his death, they had been her most intimate friends. It was strange, therefore, that despite their frequent visits, she did not mention the Roman temple to them. But some inner reticence withheld her. She

hesitated to put it to the test of other eyes. So she bore with her, throughout the week, the feeling of a secret.

One afternoon they called earlier than usual. Mrs. Fellbridge was talking to Silvanus beside the temple pool, when she saw them in the upper garden. She had a guilty feeling of being caught. What would Charlie think of Silvanus? It was too absurd. But her anxiety was needless. The god had disappeared.

The General had heard the sound of voices and laughter. He saw Mrs. Fellbridge hurrying up the garden, and looked for her companion. She waved gaily.

'Hullo, Charlie. Hullo, Helena. How are you?' As she hastened to meet them she felt confused. She wanted to stop them before they came near enough to see the temple.

'How d'ye do, Dolly? Hope we haven't disturbed you, dear; we have to go down to Sidham, and there were one or two things I still want to discuss about the Fête, so we came early,' Helena greeted her. Mrs. Fellbridge felt herself blushing as she shook the General's lean friendly hand. To hide her confusion, she kissed Helena on both cheeks, a cordiality which surprised her friend, for Dolly Fellbridge was not a gushing woman.

'Where's your friend, Dolly? Don't let us interrupt,' asked Charles, looking round with appraising eyes. The garden was at its best; azaleas flamed against the yews, broom blazed in the borders among the pinks and lupins. A late-flowering northern garden, with a background of silver birch, sweeping moor, and clear sky.

'Oh, no, I'm alone,' Mrs. Fellbridge answered him, uneasily glancing behind her. Helena looked at her curiously. What was worrying Dollie?

'Oh, I thought I heard you laughing with someone,' Charles said idly.

Mrs. Fellbridge's blush mounted higher, to her great discomfort. 'I *was* laughing; I had a silly idea,' she replied. Charles rubbed his chin.

'What a gorgeous day,' he remarked.

'Come along inside; there are such a lot of things I want to discuss, too, and if you're going to Sidham, you might do some shopping for me, will you?' She turned and led them towards the house. Behind her back, Charles glanced at his wife. But Helena was staring at Dolly's back with a puzzled expression. She, too, had heard that laughter; and she could have sworn there were two voices; Dolly's own, rather deep tones, and another, a childish, rippling laugh.

Suddenly the General paused. His eyes were on the smooth lawn under his feet.

'I say, Dollie; sheep getting in somewhere?' He bent to look closer.

'Sheep?' Mrs. Fellbridge stopped to look. An expression of annoyance came over her face. 'Oh dear; I didn't notice that.'

Charles looked up with surprise.

'By Jove, Dollie, I'm not sure; if this wasn't England, I'd say goats.' He paused. For Dolly's clear grey eyes were clouded, almost hostile. What on earth . . . ? He coughed.

'You'd better write direct to Dick Talbot, and ask him to look to your fences. These farmers won't repair fences, I know, so it's no use asking Dodds.'

'Yes, Charlie. I will,' she said meekly.

As they drove away later, Helena Gibb said seriously to her husband, 'Charlie, I'm worried about Dollie. I don't think she's well; that flush looked like heart to me. You know what the doctor said, when she was nursing Walter'

'H'm. Yes, I remember. Thought she was a bit odd, myself.'

'I do wish she wouldn't work so hard in that garden,' Helena said.

The General was silent. He was wondering about those hoof-marks.

IV.

The day of the Fête was fine but overcast. Standing at the french window, Mrs. Fellbridge sniffed the air anxiously. There was a sultry heaviness which she distrusted. She did hope this oppression did not mean thunder. What on earth could she do with all those mothers and babies if it rained ? She did not feel in the mood for mothers and babies.

Shaking off the unwonted depression, she went out. The garden rang with the sound of hammering. She found Mr. Garside fixing up the side-shows, an occupation which gave him enormous pleasure. The village ladies arrived in relays, laden with bulging parcels, all beaming at Mrs. Fellbridge. The Rector's good spirits were infectious, and everyone worked with a will.

Mrs. Fellbridge helped old Mrs. Brown to fasten hundreds of bright paper roses to the laurels. She felt slightly ashamed of her distaste for the gaudy atrocities, for the roses represented hours of patient work. They were all numbered, and a prize would be given for the winning number ; it was a tea-set, given by the grocer. Mrs. Fellbridge, praising its utility, secretly hoped that she would not draw the lucky number.

After laying out the various stalls, the garden began to look very full. Hot and dusty, Mrs. Fellbridge had only time to snatch some lunch standing.

About half-past one, dressed in a soft grey silk frock, with

a shady black lace hat perched on her shining curls, she strolled down the garden, making her way towards the secret temple. She longed to sit peacefully beside the quiet pool, and lose herself in timeless reverie.

Her tiredness evaporated like mists in the sun as she hurried down the lower garden. Happiness, that joyous sense of youth, came welling up in her. Again she felt the nearness of her husband, and was glad. And once again she experienced that little, not unpleasant sense of shock as she saw Silvanus waiting for her by the Altar steps. She greeted him with pleasure, for she realised that she had not seen the little creature for some days, and that she had missed him.

'Where have you been all this time?' she asked; but absent-mindedly, for she was feasting her eyes on the pool. How peaceful it was; how right. She sighed, pleasantly relaxed.

Silvanus hopped, and grinned cheerfully at her.

'I've been to see a friend on your behalf,' he said, and his voice emanated virtue.

'On my behalf? Who was that?' she asked idly, one half of her consciousness resting lightly in the quiet of the pool.

'Oh, you don't know her,' he replied. He chuckled. 'It was one of the British mothers.'

'What do you mean?' Her mind leapt with painful clarity to the village institute, where, at that moment, she knew the Mothers' Union were finishing their lunch before coming on to the Fête.

Silvanus scratched his nose reflectively.

'Haven't you heard of them?' he asked, surprised. 'There were several of them in my day; they were the goddesses of the Legions, you know. Great favourites

with the men on the Wall. Most of them went away with the Eagles, but the British mothers stayed here. I went to see one of them whom I used to know. Hadn't seen her for centuries. But you women are wonderful. She hadn't changed a bit.'

'I don't know what you're talking about,' exclaimed Mrs. Fellbridge irritably. The recollection of her coming duties had shattered her momentary peace of mind, and she had remembered several things still waiting to be done. That rather bewildering feeling of two personalities came over her again. She rose to go back to the house.

'Listen to me a minute, Silvanus. Please behave yourself, and be very careful this afternoon. I have a lot of people coming, and you must not keep popping up and calling me.' She turned away.

The little god nodded.

'I know. The Denestown mothers,' he said cheerfully. 'That's all right, dearest. You can safely leave them to me and the Mater Dea.'

Mrs. Fellbridge, her mind preoccupied, had not paid much attention; suddenly his words half-penetrated to her consciousness. Something startled, caused her thoughts to hover, uncertain.

'What did you say?' she asked quickly. But the god had vanished.

At half-past two, Mrs. Gibb formally opened the Fête. The Mothers' Union were in extremely good spirits. There were about seventy of them, and innumerable children, and as there was a large number of village people, the lawn resounded with laughter and chatter. The oppressive heat of the afternoon did not appear to affect them. Mrs. Fellbridge, going round with Helena, and watching her

sensible purchase of useful articles, was struck with an almost physical awareness of the general good humour. How they did enjoy this sort of party. It must be a pleasant break in the monotony of their lives.

A pity, though, that their laughter was so discordant ; it struck like the beat of little hammers in her aching head.

Trying to find something possible to buy among the heaps of flannel atrocities on the Ladies' Guild stall, she saw General Gibb, a fixed and determined smile on his face, intent on doing his duty. He, too, sought a possible purchase. She was struck with the eagerness with which the farmer's wife helping Mrs. Garside rushed to serve him. Surely it was unnecessary for him to joke so familiarly with the woman ? Their sense of humour was so different, thought Mrs. Fellbridge, as she saw the woman hold up a tiny baby's vest to Charles, giggling. The implication was obvious, and she couldn't help a ridiculous vision of him resplendent in the little woollies ; but their laughter was just a little boisterous. He was finally served with some shooting socks, and turning, winked at Mrs. Fellbridge.

'Nice, aren't they ?' he remarked cheerfully. 'I say, Mrs. Garside,' he added, 'I've promised to open the rose-garden ; do come and help me and choose the first rose. I'm sure you'll be lucky.'

'Dear Charles,' thought Mrs. Fellbridge. 'He always does the right thing.' But she saw the envious glances of the other stall-holders as the pair walked away, and wondered if Mrs. Garside knew she looked so preposterously delighted. An elderly woman in grey drew aside to let them pass. Mrs. Fellbridge saw that she noticed the curious pleasure of the Rector's wife, too, for there was an enigmatical and rather mocking smile on her face. Mrs. Fellbridge wondered who she was, but she lost sight of her in the crowd.

A little trill of music caught her ear. Someone playing a flute? She paused to listen, for the air had been pleasing; but the noise was so appalling that she could not catch it again. A pity. Whoever it had been could play well.

She wandered aimlessly across the lawn, chatting to her guests. At the sweet-stall she noticed the elderly Vicar of Denestown engaged in an animated conversation with little Miss Potts, the organist. He brandished an extremely sticky lump of toffee in her face, until in self-defence, she opened her mouth, bashfully, and allowed him to pop the dangerous morsel inside; a proceeding which caused a good deal of merriment among the onlookers.

'How ridiculous people are,' thought Mrs. Fellbridge. 'They wouldn't dream of behaving so childishly on any normal occasion.' Normal. That was what was so curious. Somehow, it didn't seem quite a normal occasion; she was beginning to feel that there was an undercurrent which she did not understand.

Mr. Garside begged her to come and fix a number on his 'guy.' 'The poor fellow has a nasty pain, Mrs. Fellbridge,' he laughed; 'do see if you can guess where it is; there's a lovely prize.'

'Dear me, I am sorry,' smiled Mrs. Fellbridge, pinning her ticket to the guy's forehead. 'I think he has a headache, poor thing.'

'I shouldn't be surprised; it is hot, isn't it?'

'Very hot; I hope we shan't have thunder,' Mrs. Fellbridge said, moving away to watch the darts competition. She had seen an ominous, coppery-coloured bank of clouds on the eastern horizon, and the still air felt vibrant with electricity. Mrs. Fellbridge felt the contrast between the potent silence of the elements and the strident noise of

people ; and saw the garden as an entity, withdrawn from all these incongruities, waiting, expectant and eager, for the threatened storm. The dry soil had a thirsty appearance ; her own body felt taut, quivering, the blood in her veins pulsing rapidly, as if she, too, was excited ; she knew a momentary longing, almost anguish, for the storm to break the tension in the air. She felt as if she, like the garden, was parched, dried up with the long lonely years, waiting to renew herself. She could enjoy the tumult of the elements. And, as she thought of the beneficence of rain on dry earth, she fancied she heard again, the music ; thin, exquisite, exciting.

'What about some tea, Dollie ?' asked Helena Gibb, taking her arm to attract her attention. Mrs. Fellbridge smiled over her shoulder.

'I do so wonder who it is playing,' she said, listening.

'Playing ?'

'Yes ; those pipes ; a flute, or something.'

'Oh, was there ? I didn't notice. Some of these village boys play the tin whistle quite well,' Helena said carelessly. 'Do come and have tea. I feel absolutely parched with thirst.'

'Yes, do let's have some.'

They went to the tea-tables under the copper-beech. Mrs. Fellbridge sat down with a sigh of relief.

'You have been good, Helena. What on earth will you do with all those things ?' she exclaimed.

Her friend laughed. 'Oh, they come in for the next bazaar,' she said.

Shrieks of laughter from the shrubbery disturbed their tea ; three-legged races were in progress, and some girls rushed wildly past the tea-tables, chased by the older boys, in a boisterous, unruly manner. Mrs. Fellbridge noticed

that the girls were not really trying to evade their pursuers ; their backward glances struck her as bold, provocative. She was struck anew by the racketey quality of the noise. It was excessive.

'It's being a great success, Dollie,' Helena told her, watching the people swarming on the lawn.

'If noise is any indication, I suppose it is,' replied her friend grimly. Helena looked at her with surprise.

'Oh well, there's bound to be noise with so many people ; they *are* happy, Dollie.'

Mrs. Fellbridge felt that rowdy, rather than happy, described them better. She never remembered such a noisy Sale of Work. It must be the inclusion of the town element. Out of the corner of her eye she was watching the Vicar of Denestown, seated at a near-by table with Miss Potts from the sweet-stall. His manner seemed so familiar, almost flirtatious, he made her feel quite uncomfortable. He leant across the table, gazing at Miss Potts until, Mrs. Fellbridge thought, the poor little thing looked quite flustered. Surely the clergy should not be quite so blatant in their attentions.

She caught herself up sharply. 'Don't be such an old woman, Dolly Fellbridge,' she told herself. 'How perfectly ridiculous.' But her irritation grew with every moment, though she chattered brightly to Helena. How oppressive it was. If only there was a breath of air.

When she returned to the upper lawn after tea, she stood astounded. A game of blind man's buff was in progress. The Rector, a handkerchief tied about his eyes, rushed wildly and rather giddily about in the centre of a ring of factory women, who, hands clasped, pranced round with exaggerated dancing steps, singing an old catch. The Rector pounced gaily at first one and then another, and

screams of laughter rewarded his efforts. Some of the women seemed quite hysterical.

'What is the matter with all these people!' thought Mrs. Fellbridge. 'How stupid of the Rector to encourage them. No need for such silly games. They don't usually behave like this. It's all very odd,' she thought, with a little involuntary shiver of distaste. Like a nightmare.

A hand on her arm drew her attention. The Vicar of Denestown, laughing at the antics of the game, beamed at her.

'Isn't it delightful to see how happy everyone is, Mrs. Fellbridge? Such a jolly Fête. How good of you to have us all.'

'Not at all,' murmured his hostess.

'Won't you join in? Such fun.' His face radiated delight.

'Oh, I think not,' said Mrs. Fellbridge hastily. 'It's so hot.'

The Vicar snatched off his hat, and waved violently to someone. Mrs. Fellbridge, with intense surprise, saw it was little Miss Potts who beckoned to him so imperiously.

'Excuse me; I promised . . .' The Vicar beamed again, and shouted, yes, actually shouted, 'Coming, Toots,' and ran across the crowded lawn to join her.

'Good gracious, has *everyone* gone mad?' she exclaimed aloud. It really was extraordinary, the atmosphere seemed positively abandoned! For the blind man's buff had devolved into a rowdy sort of catch-as-catch-can; both clergymen, and several of the village men, were chasing the giggling women about the lawn; the laughter was raucous, indecent. Those elder villagers who were not running in the game, gathered in little facetious groups, pointing out the antics of the players and making half-scandalised comments.

'I think I'd better do something ; perhaps if I organised some sports. . . .' Mrs. Fellbridge wondered. She moved forward to intercept the Rector. She was thoroughly agitated. To allow the Fête to degenerate into such a riotous party was incredible, the Rector must be mad. The place was like a fun-fair.

Then she stopped in absolute consternation.

Mrs. Garside, hatless, and crowned with paper roses, came tripping, dancing, across the lawn. High above her head she waved a tiny, pink baby's vest, and she was singing ; singing clearly, if breathlessly, the Jewel Song from *Faust*.

Her appearance completed the rout. An unrestrained burst of laughter acclaimed her progress as she tripped across to the Rector, and presented him with the vest, prize in a penny lottery. The usually dignified old man clutched the prize in a paroxysm of amusement, while the hot, exhausted and dishevelled women of the Mothers' Union flung themselves on the grass, helpless with laughter.

Mrs. Fellbridge felt quite sick with disgust, but some impish sense of the ridiculous seized her momentarily. It was ridiculous ; those sober old Garsides, prancing about like clowns to the riotous entertainment of the *hoi polloi*. But . . .

'Ridiculous !' thought Mrs. Fellbridge. A wave of sheer anger overwhelmed her. It was not ridiculous, it was disgraceful ; an appalling lapse of taste. One could carry jocularity too far, especially with these people. So undignified. How could they ?

She felt ill. The noise, the heat ; it was terribly hot, surely ? The unrestraint and this *peculiar* atmosphere affected her physically. She must have some quiet. If only there was a breeze ! Seized with the desire for quiet,

for a moment's privacy to overcome this giddiness, and marshal her faculties to cope with the situation, she turned and made her way instinctively towards the lower garden.

It was then that she noticed the silent, attentive, rather furtive-looking group of women beside the lilacs. Struck by an indefinable something in their attitudes, she hurried to see what was happening here.

They were gathered round that same tall, strange woman, in the grey garments, whom Mrs. Fellbridge had seen earlier in the afternoon. The woman seemed immersed in something she held between her hands. What was it? Surely . . . oh, surely not . . .

The woman was gazing into a crystal globe, speaking in low tones, and her audience craned forward in awed silence, intent upon her words. Fortune-telling. Who on earth was this? Some one from Denestown, Mrs. Fellbridge supposed. This was really too much, she thought indignantly. She swept forward.

'What is all this? Who are you, my good woman, and who gave you permission to tell fortunes here? I cannot allow it; we have no licence for fortune-telling, and the Rector would be most . . .'

The woman in the grey garments raised her eyes to meet Mrs. Fellbridge's stormy gaze. And all the righteous anger, all the unacknowledged but painful protests of her outraged fastidiousness, receded, faded, merged in overwhelming recognition of the Power which poured out at her through those dark, unfathomable eyes.

'Mater Matuta te salutet.'

The sonorous Latin, spoken in low deep tones, rolled over Mrs. Fellbridge's consciousness like the mutter of thunder in high hills. 'Oh, God,' whispered Mrs. Fellbridge, her hand at her throat. She was afraid. She felt

the earth tremble beneath her ; she was aware of it, the dark earth, quick with life, the endless upthrusting forces of growth, matter struggling to give expression to the Eternal. Time was not ; and as she stood poised between fear and knowledge, she heard the woman speak again.

'Have no fear,' said the sonorous voice. 'There is no evil here ; for Evil is of Time, and the gods are timeless. What you fear is but the impulse of life in nature, in which is neither good nor evil, for it is part of the all. Peace be with you.'

The Grey Woman smiled on Mrs. Fellbridge, a long slow smile like the kiss of the sun on ripening corn. The group of spectators, who had fallen back, uncomfortably aware of strange happenings, parted to allow her to pass. She went with a gliding motion, and the awed women, casting frightened glances at Mrs. Fellbridge, standing so erect and still, broke up, moved quickly away. Mrs. Fellbridge stood there alone.

The strange, alarming feelings which had silenced her quick anger, left her shaken, almost terrified. For a moment her mind was blank ; and then into that dark void came a thought ; a memory. She heard the voice of Silvanus, speaking to her by the pool that afternoon : 'Leave it to me and the Mater Dea.'

She shivered. Brushed a hand across her eyes. She remembered another phrase, spoken idly, days ago ; yes, the day on which the Rector had arranged the Fête.

'A sort of Fertility Cult.'

She gave a little cry, a moan, and swayed giddily.

She felt a steady hand under her elbow. Charles Gibb, very spruce and cool, looked at her with puzzled eyes.

'What's up, Dollie ? Faint ? Here, hold up, my dear. Come and sit down. What's the matter ?'

He found her a chair by the empty tea-tables, and stood tactfully in front of her, whilst he watched the scene on the lawn. He thought it was stupid of the Rector to allow these people to get so out of hand. Those awful Mothers' Union women squatted everywhere, wildly hilarious, looking almost as if they were the worse for drink. Children, quite unchecked by their elders, raced about, shouting and fighting like little savages. The garden was a bedlam of heat and noise.

Mrs. Fellbridge, wearily removing her hat to rest her throbbing temples, saw the Rector, demonstrating the more intricate footwork of a Highland fling to a grinning group of boys. She gave a little shiver.

'It's like a revel!' she exclaimed. The General, distressed, looked down at her. She looked very ill. Suddenly he felt a drop of rain. 'By Jove, we're in for a storm,' he exclaimed.

At that moment Mrs. Fellbridge saw Silvanus beckoning to her from the steps leading to the lower garden. She sprang to her feet. 'Silvanus.'

'What?' asked Charles, surprised. She laid an urgent hand on his arm.

'I understand, now! Charles, be a dear, get these people into the house, or the garage, before it rains; they'll be drenched. I *know* what's the matter now. And I must go at once, to stop him, before anything worse happens. Please hurry.'

Giving him a little push towards the house, she ran lightly among the crowd towards the steps.

A peal of thunder crashed overhead. There came a second of stunned silence; then the garden was a seething crowd of panic-stricken women and children, all pushing and rushing for shelter.

The General was caught in a stream of people fighting to get into the house. He saw his wife standing at the french window, shepherding them inside, and picked up a small frightened child who clung to his leg.

'I'll send Helena after her,' he thought, anxious about Dollie. He put the child down inside the window. Mr. Garside was soothing the frightened women. He smiled consolingly.

'Only thunder, ladies ; and we need rain,' he reminded them gently.

Helena took Charles by the arm. She spoke quietly but urgently. 'Charles, we must go and look for Dollie. I saw her running like a mad thing down the steps. I don't like it, and the storm isn't over yet.'

'You're right, my dear. I'll go at once.'

'I'm coming with you,' said Helena firmly. 'She's ill, I'm sure. There seems something very odd here this afternoon.'

'There is,' agreed her husband grimly. 'Come on, then ; we must get her indoors before the rain really starts.'

V.

Mrs. Fellbridge saw Silvanus hop down the steps. She ran after him, to find him dancing all over her favourite flower-beds. After everything else, this roused her to fury. She ran down the steps faster than she had run for years, calling to him to stop. But he leapt higher in the air, laughing, and capered on. Mrs. Fellbridge raced after him, her only thought now to catch him and shake him until his little white teeth rattled.

'I'll teach him, the little jackanapes ; Fertility Cult, indeed !' she thought. Never, in fifty years, had such a passion of real anger possessed her. She ran, heedless of

thunder, darkness, or the scattered drops of rain. Breathless, she came to the Altar steps.

' Silvanus. Where are you ? ' she called, gasping painfully. Her heart pounded tumultuously, iron bands encircled her chest, her head felt pierced with red-hot spikes.

Silence answered her. She stood irresolute, fighting the pain, listening.

Out of the trees behind the pool came the whisper of a little, maddening tune. Such a tune as might have been played by a shepherd in Arcady, long, long ago. A lilting, faërie tune such as Pan played, in the orange groves of Greece, when the world was very young. Her anger dying away, Mrs. Fellbridge stared across the temple pool, and saw her husband standing there. Her young husband, tall, fair, smiling at her, as if he had just left his books to call her in to tea. All her fears died out of heart and mind, together with all the loneliness of the years. She was young, ardent, a girl meeting her lover with shyness and uplifted heart.

Charles and Helena, hurrying to the top of the steps, saw Mrs. Fellbridge, and paused involuntarily. For about her, as she stood, there played a strange light, as if of melted gold. They saw her fling out both hands, and heard her cry.

' Walter, my darling.'

A terrible flash of lightning split the very heavens, followed by a tremendous roar of thunder. They saw Mrs. Fellbridge fall. Charles leapt the steps in one, rushed forward. Then halted, putting out a hand to stop his wife.

Mrs. Fellbridge lay, face downward, across a large, squared stone, among piles of earth and stone, where there was a half-finished excavation in the bank. The General knelt to pick her up. In the flash of lightning which

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followed, he saw that on the face of the stone there was time-blurred lettering. He lifted Mrs. Fellbridge gently.

She was smiling, peacefully ; she looked very young. She was dead. In her left hand she clasped something. When the General gently prised open her fingers, he saw that it was some sort of brooch. He thought it was a Roman fibula.

ADOLFA'S LOVER.

(*Angiolina Speaks*)

*Adolfa has a lover,
He comes from over the mountains ;
He has such wonderful teeth and eyes
As are not to be found the wide world over,
Ah, Signora,
Adolfa's lover !*

*I shall be married at Easter
In a little church in the mountains ;
I shall live where the flocks from the wind take cover—
He sings as he comes, with a splendid voice,
Ah, Signora,
Adolfa's lover !*

*He whom I wed has a casa,
And a goat, and a garden of herbs on the mountain,
And we shall be rich when the year is over—
But that once you might see him, and hear him sing,
Ah, Signora,
Adolfa's lover !*

BEATRICE CREGAN.

THE DRUMMERS.

BY DOUGLAS GORDON.

OF all natural sounds the most interesting, perhaps, are those which wild creatures produce by the employment of faculties other than their vocal organs. Most naturalists are familiar with the drumming of woodpeckers, about which there has been so much correspondence within the past year or so. Others have listened to the eerie booming with which certain species of grouse make mystery in the purple gloom of the North American twilight, but there is nothing more remarkable than the vibrant, humming twang of the common snipe's pinions as this curious little bird describes its interminable aerial circlings over our own marshes in springtime.

Surprisingly few country people have any knowledge of this note, even though the moorland air vibrates with its pulsations. This, no doubt, is largely due to the innumerable counter-attractions, the carnival of wild bird music which delights the aural senses at the same time as snipe are drumming. Skylarks are aloft in the full riot of song, with meadow-pipits to swell the orchestra at lower levels and in a corresponding key. Where the gorse-gold flames, linnets, hedge-sparrows and yellowhammers contribute their full quota. Far and near, the moorland rocks in unison with the curlew's trill, and at the first hint of an alien presence the green plover are a-wing, clamorous and insistent in their demands upon an intruder's attention. It is little wonder, therefore, that a faint sound, so high in the blue that its source is usually invisible, should escape any ear

except those strained to distinguish it from the many distracting elements, or that the casual passer-by should proceed upon his way, retaining no impression of something which was unclassified if not actually unheard.

It must also be remembered that the summer haunts of the snipe are seldom visited after dark when the bird's activities are most noticeable. Though widely distributed, its breeding range is local, being mainly confined to extensive swamps with a preference for those of the uplands where, unless deliberately sought, it attracts little attention. Indeed, if noticed at all, the sound is not as a rule identified by the ordinary countryman whose attitude towards nocturnal harmonies is vague at best. In any case, the snipe is rarely suspected as the musician. Upon Dartmoor, the ghostly sound emanating at dusk from the treacherous mist-shrouded mires, and possessing that peculiar muffled quality which wide spaces impart, would probably not be investigated too closely by the passing moorman on his mountain pony. He would not necessarily regard it as supernatural, but like the unearthly squall of the apprehensive vixen who watches his progress from the ridges, or the weird meanderings of *ignis fatuus*, it conveys too strong a hint of the uncanny, superstition still figuring, largely if subconsciously, in the West-countryman's mentality. Upon the lowlands of Devon and Somerset, when dusk falls, the composite but vague identity of the 'landrail' embraces the activities of most nocturnal birds, whereas in Wales—that land of picturesque phraseology and synonym—the twilight drummer has been styled the 'Hoolet of the Bogs,' although the precise definition of this species, whether avian or spectral, is not quite clear. In the case of other localisms, such as 'Heather-bleater' or 'Air-goat,' the same uncertainty exists, and it is doubtful whether many rustics connect the mysteri-

ous musician of the summer night with the little brown bird which they flush from the spring-heads during December or January.

Though not usually regarded as diurnal, the species is more or less active at all hours, and throughout the breeding season is seldom still. When the early summer sun is high, far from becoming quiescent, the mated snipe, now aglow with amorous emotion, ascends into altitudes which even the soaring skylark seldom attempts. There with the fresh green world, blue-veiled and faintly a-shimmer, spread wide below, he describes his interminable evolutions, indulging in the frequent fantastic gyrations by means of which the ecstasy of his soul finds expression. It seems curious that a little bird designed by Nature to spend the greater part of his life upon the wet ground, from which during the winter months he rises only with extreme reluctance, should throughout this brief season develop into a veritable sprite of the air, his slender wings acquiring a buoyancy and indefatigability unexcelled even by the most accomplished feathered aviators. Indeed, as the long day draws to its close it brings no limit to the snipe's activities. Rather the contrary, for as twilight deepens the vitality of such birds becomes accentuated under normal conditions, and this tendency remains unaffected by the diurnal energies of the breeding season. With night's approach, however, the swooping, circling bird comes nearer to earth, and in the hush of sundown the drumming note acquires a startling clarity. It seems scarcely credible at times that pinions so minute and fragile can produce a sound so far-reaching. On a still night it becomes clearly audible a mile away, and as the rapid circles widen with the gathering darkness, it may be heard over land and from among surroundings to which the wild mysterious little bird is himself a complete stranger.

The snipe beats his first roll when early birds begin to sing, and the performance roughly corresponds with the duration of the avian orchestra. Even as the celebrated dawn chorus greets the May sunrise, so the weird aeolian tattoo hails the kindling of the summer stars, and not the least remarkable snipe concert personally heard was given as a fitting close to Midsummer Day last year, which for some unaccountable reason was notable for an almost unprecedented festival of snipe 'music.' The date mentioned was somewhat late in the year for such an exhibition. It took place above a marshy common upon which snipe have never before been known to breed, although the place has always been a favourite haunt of green plover. The night being warm and still, the notes were borne over the air for an almost incredible distance, and upon nearer investigation the skyscape seemed thronged with invisible musicians, floating like spirits under the stars and filling the night with suggestive unearthly harmonies.

Like other branches of avian activity, the proceeding is subject to influences unknown to man and is unaffected, so far as observation can establish, by atmospheric conditions or lunar phases. Upon certain nights the concert is in full progress, on others, apparently equally suitable, the auditorium is as silent as though neither bird voice nor thrumming pinions had ever made melody in its solitudes. One and all, the birds are either inspired with frenzied energy or they are still, and man can do no more than note the effect, scarcely hazarding a conjecture as to the governing agency.

The sound, though usually produced in sheer ebullition of spirits, is not necessarily joyous. It expresses emotion but differs from song in that it sometimes indicates extreme agitation rather than ecstasy. Parent birds in distress for

their young which an intruder has approached too closely drum incessantly as they sweep to and fro overhead, and one has heard a female snipe varying the little plaintive call which she makes at such a time with alarmed and hurried vibrations of her stringed instrument while dipping along upon wavering, troubled wings. The note is always given when in descent, the length of the roll corresponding with that of the sudden plunge through air, so characteristic of the bird's flight at this season.

The male is the principal musician, the female displaying her ability mainly when sounding the note of distress. She is the *vocalist*, however, or rather, perhaps, she is the more 'talkative' of the two. Curiously enough, apart from the famous alarm note with which every sportsman is familiar, the species is usually considered to be silent in the main. Even standard books of reference seldom mention any other cry, yet the voice of the snipe is a common sound upon the summer moorland. When under the impression that she is in sole possession of her lonely haunt, the bird frequently utters a harsh note not unlike the croak of a frog as she hunts assiduously among the moist roots. With the chicks about her, or when summoning them for any special purpose, she clucks after the manner of a barn-door fowl —a liquid chuckling call, far-sounding in the silence of the marshes, but like the monotonous 'crake' of the landrail, exceedingly baffling and difficult to locate. Indeed, like the latter bird's call, it might almost be regarded as ventriloquial. The proximity of a snipe family may frequently be discovered by this means, particularly in country such as high Dartmoor where wild cries are most noticeable in the immense silence, and upon such occasions if one watches for a while, an attractive little scene may be witnessed.

Around upon every side stretches the moorland, its barren

undulations broken by outcrops of hoary, tumbled granite in and out of which the wheatears dart or hold lively intercourse with their neighbours, the stonechats. High overhead sounds the raven's croak, and from somewhere in the little marshy hollow, liquid and insistent, comes now and again the cluck or chuckle as the mother snipe discovers something edible, or calls a laggard to her side. Then suddenly through the stillness there quivers another sound, the tuneful thrumming of tense quills trembling under the stroke of the wind's fingers, and the soft monotone of the mother bird changes in the instant to a shrill delighted chatter, as, buoyant and almost ethereal as a wisp of bog-cotton, her mate drifts down, and alighting upon the nearest rock, remains there for a few moments, an elegant elfin shape, like a pixy householder benevolently regarding his domestic circle.

He receives a charming welcome, repeated as he leaves his perch and joins the little group paddling about the moss-hags or freshets. And this note, it would seem, if not entirely peculiar to the hen bird, is mainly reserved for converse with her mate or for strictly confidential discussions. One may hear very similar dialogues at times between sandpipers under much the same circumstances, and the note being not altogether unlike the shriller and more continuous chattering of oyster-catchers or redshanks, probably represents the language of most little waders when they have occasion to 'talk.'

The conversational efforts of the female snipe do not end with welcoming her mate's return, however. She sometimes vociferates in the most excited manner when both birds are upon the wing to the accompaniment of the male's drumming, the effect upon such occasions being curious. She has also a shrill quacking note which she utters when,

as frequently happens, she flies to seek her husband or join him for a short while upon his aerial gyrations. This does not always sound so amicable, however. There is at times a distinct hint of the querulous about it, and rather suggests altercation, probably protest at his absenting himself too long from family duties. Her complaint, if such it is, may not be without justification, for the male bird, in true masculine fashion, appears to leave nursery affairs in hands which he doubtless considers more competent than his own, and while the mother is clucking to the chicks he may often be heard in the distance, playing upon his 'drum,' obviously enjoying himself immensely, and it sometimes appears as though this shirking of responsibility becomes irritating to his harassed wife, who sallies forth to interview him in the manner described.

The chicks for the most part are silent, although occasionally their minute pipings can be distinguished when the little family is grouped about the mother, unconscious of observation. Their main concern is to attract as little notice as possible, complete effacement in anything approaching emergency being the rule of their young lives. At the approach of danger both parents take wing and drum overhead for a while, after which, if the enemy fails to depart, the mother bird soon drops to ground not far away at some point from which she can watch proceedings. As her agitation increases she approaches nearer and nearer by short circuitous flights, until taking cover, she is lost to sight, and although unaware of her precise whereabouts, one realises that she is near, the knowledge that her bright distressful eyes are watching every movement having a disturbing effect upon the observer's conscience. She does not display the fearlessness of the sandpiper which in such a case wheels around or, perching in full view upon a near

hummock, whistles a tuneful plaint. The snipe's courage is no less than that of her neighbour, however, for she has greater cause to fear a human being, the monster whose proximity too often means death to her race, and under the circumstances the silent protest of so shy and persecuted a bird is the more affecting.

So anxious is she for the safety of her young that she returns to search for them long before the intruder is out of sight, running over the heath and clucking anxiously as she approaches. The chicks, of course, have not gone far, merely trickling into the herbage which, however short, absorbs their tiny nondescript coloured bodies as though they had been rain-drops. When suddenly intruding upon a snipe family it is sometimes difficult to believe that the little ones have not taken invisible wing, or indeed, were ever there, so impossible does it seem for them to have found such complete shelter upon the sparse moorland turf. One moment they are in evidence, piping in subdued tones or contentedly pecking about. Then, as one's advance under cover of boulders or ling can no longer be disguised, the parents resort to clamorous flight and in the same second the spot where the family has been becomes to all appearance as destitute of life as though the grass had never bent beneath any weight more perceptible than that of a dragon-fly. Over it the bog-cotton waves, the clouds cast their reflections, but the tiny chicks have melted into the friendly heath which so kindly lends its colours, like a screen, to shield the young life which through the long course of the centuries it has produced and fostered.

Keen must be the human vision which can detect a hiding snipe chick unless by chance a point of sunlight scintillates upon an anxiously watching eye twinkling like a dew-drop deep in the bronze of the herbage. Upon one such occasion,

when standing still with no suspicion that such interesting neighbours were near, I saw my retriever make a scratching movement with one paw and imagined that he was trying to unearth a mouse. A moment later, using his claws like a rake, he brought a downy chick to light, and while I examined the little oddity to make sure that he had not been harmed, the dog, employing precisely similar tactics a few feet away, produced a second. Very quaint they were, balls of fluff about the size of Spanish chestnut shells, supported on legs as slender as harebell stalks which looked comically long as they straddled off, making no further attempt to hide when once discovered.

Apart from the natural gift of concealment and its peculiar erratic flight, the snipe employs no wiles. An ingenuous little bird, he would be most confiding had not ill fortune singled him out as a favourite mark for the sportsman, and in lands where hard experience has not taught him to shun human proximity, he permits the near approach of man as fearlessly as a ringed plover or sanderling upon the beach. Even the brooding bird makes little attempt to conceal the whereabouts of her nest. She never runs from her post like the curlew and lapwing, but remains until the thunderous vibrations of an approaching footfall become too terrifying, when she arises with a twittering plea for the treasures which she is no longer able to guard. That so fairy-like a bird should lay a clutch more beautiful than that of any kindred species seems only appropriate, nor is the unusual size of the egg remarkable when one remembers that room must be found within the olive-tinted, chestnut-splashed shell, not only for the nestling's stilt-like legs, but for the bill which even in the callow stage is comparatively long.

The position of the nest is very similar to that of a meadow-pipit, being made upon firm ground, preferably under a tuft

of heather, and usually but not invariably encircled by swamp in which the youngsters may paddle as soon as they embark upon life. In England there appears to be no limit as to elevation, and birds reared upon the uplands adhere to their breeding-places until the sealing up of the springs by frost compels them to seek less rigorous conditions.

How long the family remains united is an interesting question. In early winter it is customary to come upon little companies—or ‘wisps,’ if one prefers to use the technical expression—frequenting the same spot regularly, and these parties, whether composed of relatives or casual acquaintances who have joined forces, remain intact as long as the individual survive. Since a covey of partridges usually consists of the brood and parents, there is no reason why the same rule should not apply to snipe, and circumstances seem to suggest that such is the case.

However that may be, at times a wisp of snipe displays almost the same unanimity as a covey under similar circumstances. Occasionally a little group of five or six will fly in such compact form that one might almost expect to see their long ‘noses’ collide, and even when they take wing singly, they choose a common direction, as though impelled by the community mind. Although certainly not gregarious in the literal sense, the common snipe, like the majority of birds, is far from being solitary by disposition. When found alone, one may assume that it has either lost or become separated from its companions. One never sees a flock upon the wing, however, and when considerable numbers are flushed from a common feeding-ground, they usually rise either singly or in ‘wisps,’ and are not necessarily scared into general flight, even though volleys of shots, fired at early starters, echo over the marsh.

‘Wisp’ is an apt term which, like a ‘murmuration’ of

starlings or 'pride' of lions, conveys a definite impression of the creatures to which it refers. As the buoyant little birds erupt from the heath one might almost imagine that they had been set in motion by a puff of wind. One is inclined to wonder sometimes whether the erratic turnings and twistings so inseparable from a snipe's flight and usually attributed to the instinct of self-preservation, are not actually due to the combined speed and lightness of the bird, which factors might conceivably produce sudden involuntary digressions akin to the swerve of a ball in a high wind. The turn could easily be effected by an unintentional and scarcely perceptible tilt of a winnowing wing, particularly as the snipe has cultivated the habit of surrendering itself to the vagaries of the air-currents, the spasmodic whims of which must be obvious to anyone who has watched wind-whirled leaves or feathers upon their uncertain course, or noted the fantastic shapes of the piled snow-drift carved by the same irresponsible agency.

At all times when upon the wing a snipe is a natural trickster, a notable exponent of 'freak' evolution. He specialises in the unexpected, and the extent to which he carries this disposition may prove disconcerting to anyone unfamiliar with his eccentricities. An inexperienced sportsman who has vainly discharged both barrels after the streak of brown lightning as it zig-zagged from the bog is not infrequently surprised to see the minute disappearing form suddenly collapse in air and dive earthwards with folded wings as though death, deferred for a few seconds, had cut short its swift flight. Flattering himself with the belief that his shot has not been wasted after all, he hurries to the place, only to see the unharmed bird again dart into air with a whimsical chirrup which, to his disappointed ears, acquires a derisive note as once again the gun is emptied in the

elusive fugitive's wake. By no stretch of the imagination could a 'mock' fall of this description be regarded as guile. It serves no strategic purpose—rather the contrary, since obviously encouraging pursuit. It is merely one of many aeronautic frolics in which the bird's volatile nature induces him to indulge. Like the ghost of Gawain 'blown down a wandering wind,' his course through air is 'all delight.' As a puppy or a young lamb gambols as it runs, so this feather-weight aeronaut, quaint both in appearance and character, frolics as he flies, untroubled by any terrifying reflections upon the possible fate which, missing his slight body, has left his even lighter spirit equally unscathed.

He is essentially a creature of the elements, and even as the storm petrel accompanies the tempest, so the movements of snipe are governed largely by weather. Frost and drought constitute the forces before which he retires, the abundance or scarcity of the species over considerable areas varying according to the season. The greater number of the birds encountered during winter are visitors from colder lands, and one cannot but wonder at the skill with which new arrivals recognise the approved halting-places of their race. Not the least remarkable feature of migration is the schedule-like procedure of all participants in the movement.

As usual in matters where the mystery of animal life is concerned, one takes it for granted not only that migrating birds should observe a fixed itinerary, but that their distribution should be effected upon the same automatic lines. It is clear that under normal conditions each suitable, or rather, perhaps, each *accepted* district receives its annual quota of 'winter-campers.' There is, however, nothing to indicate the means by which the assortment takes place—whether it is merely a matter of securing a pitch by chance selection, or each contingent of birds proceeding to the

prescribed district in which its ancestors have wintered for countless generations.

Not the least interesting point in this respect is the question of desirability. Outstanding in this as in everything else, the snipe possesses definite ideas. Certain spots appear to offer peculiar attractions, indistinguishable to human senses, and to such places the birds return day after day, although often courting destruction by such conservatism. Surrounded by miles of marshland any part of which may seem equally suitable, there is usually some spring or hollow the particular advantages of which are recognised by residents or migrants alike, and whether these spots lie amidst desolate moorland or within a stone's throw of farm buildings seems to be entirely immaterial. The snipe consider them desirable, and although there may be numerous places where they might feed in perfect security within easy distance, they either consider the attractions worth the price or are incapable of breaking away from immemorial custom. Possibly upon account of his complete inoffensiveness the bird has acquired no guile even in the matter of self-defence. In any case, however, his outlook upon life appears to be fatalistic.

From first to last whimsical, mysterious, interesting and eminently attractive in life, pathetically minute when brought to the table, the snipe has a special appeal to human consideration, human sympathy. It is probable that in future years he will be granted the privileges of the skylark—once considered fair game for the gun, now regarded merely as an ornament to the countryside, an 'emblem of happiness.' Meanwhile he drums in the spring, taking the world as he finds it, for all birds are philosophers.

THE GIRL IN THE BLUE JERSEY.

BY DOROTHY DUDLEY SHORT.

MR. John Dawkins lived at Slough. He thought Slough a very fine place. It had broad streets, several super-cinemas and super-bars and good shops. What more could anyone want? Mr. Dawkins didn't hold with new-fangled ideas, but he liked modern improvements in lighting and comfort, and he always said the present day was better than the times of his youth: which showed, of course, that he was not really getting old. He was, as he had always been, progressive. His shop, however, had not progressed very much. It stood exactly where it had always stood, at the corner of one of the side roads, so that one window faced the main street. That made it better than the shops farther up the side road, and though there had been some anxious times it had never been closed, for all the appearance of Baker, Baker, Jones, & Sons with their grocery department and cut prices. It continued to make a small profit, and 'What more could anyone want?' said Mr. Dawkins. So long as he and his wife could live, and Harold could have a good education he was quite content. Harold was his only son. Mr. Dawkins didn't approve of large families. It wasn't right, he often said, to bring hordes of children into the world for other people to keep. It was because of that that there wasn't stuff to go round. Mr. Dawkins was quite sound economically. So Harold, being apparently the alternative to a horde, was enough. 'What would happen to England if the millions of people in the

same position as himself only produced one son didn't occur to Mr. Dawkins : sound economics aren't concerned with the future.

The same people came into the shop, day after day, week after week, year after year, and many of them had known Dawkins, Senior. It was pleasant to comment regularly on the weather to these people, and to do them small favours—Mr. Dawkins liked doing small favours ; it reminded him that, despite various appearances to the contrary, England is a Christian country and that every Sunday morning he went to the Three-times-Reformed Methodless Chapel. What Harold meant when he said of these regular customers : 'But, after all, Father, they're not immortal,' Mr. Dawkins couldn't imagine. But it was no use worrying about what Harold meant. There was in any case something very strange about Harold. He began by saying queer things, and then he got worse—*much* worse.

'There must be something in this 'ere 'eredity,' said Mr. Dawkins, 'for I'm sure the ejicatun's been all right.'

Looking up he saw the cold eye of Mrs. Dawkins fixed upon him.

'John,' she said, 'do you know what 'eredity means ? It means that one of us is like 'Arold.'

Mr. Dawkins stared.

'Then what *can* it be ?' he asked.

Mrs. Dawkins was a dear creature, but she could be severe at times. Fortunately in the main she had the same ideas as her husband. She liked Slough, she liked the shop, above all she liked the rooms above, the tea-cups, the window-curtains and the large fern that was pushed up close to them. She might have wished for a daughter, but there it was : Mr. Dawkins had said a son was best, because he could help to carry on the business, and he probably knew. The fact

that Harold didn't help to carry on the business : that indeed he didn't help to carry on anything whatever, was, however, the topic of the moment.

' You don't know what goes on in these schools,' Mrs. Dawkins said. ' They teachers—'

She rambled on, giving faintly unfavourable impressions of a Miss Rose who had come to see her just after Harold won his scholarship at the County High School.

But Mr. Dawkins wasn't impressed.

"Tain't that," he said, "it's 'creddy, that's what it is. Blunt's boy's all right, and 'e got a scholarship just the same time as 'Arold. Been at the County five years, and now he's helping old Blunt, and they're going to put up Blunt and Son."

Mrs. Dawkins' mouth—always a straight slit below her nose—shortened perceptibly.

' Do you suggest, Mr. Dawkins, that there's anyone in my family goes on like 'Arold, for I'm sure there's no one in yours.'

' Well, no, not exactly, dear,' coaxed Mr. Dawkins, ' not now, as it were, but 'oo knows? Everyone's born from someone, and your mother's grandmother, now, 'oo was she? '

A faint flush suddenly pervaded Mrs. Dawkins' small middle-ageing face. She remembered her grandmother down at the shoemaker's, and her father's mother who had been in service, but what about *her* mother again? Some half-forgotten whispering gossip stole into her mind. A love child—yes, that's what she was—a love child. And the father? Well, best not think—nothing in the world was so tiresome as thinking. Better go to Woolworth's! She put down her knitting—got coat and hat and went out into the comforting streets of Slough.

Comforting indeed they were—broad and secure—not narrow and falling to pieces like those of a little village once seen on a holiday—but strong and prosperous, suggestive of the means to live and cheap amusements superimposed. Nothing lacking ; what more could anyone want ?

Harold was standing at the cross-roads watching the traffic and the lines that made patterns as the cars passed and rounded the corner by the super-cinema, and the colours that complemented or defied one another. His finger itched for the tool. How he loved the feel of brush or pencil in the hand, the swirl of it as it swept and coiled about the paper ! Curves and twists seemed to come from nowhere—often the thing went by itself—and the pattern only revealed itself later. Yet it was driven by something that Harold knew belonged to himself far more surely than if he had thought out his drawing carefully beforehand. And then a girl in a blue jumper crossed the road. That was absolute—that was perfect ! He could not wait. The brush ! He turned and ran, nearly falling over his mother, who had at that precise moment reached the corner.

'Arold !' she called after him, but he did not hear.

Alone in his top bedroom, he seized a white block—water colour, yes water colour ! The colours should run into one another and give the feeling of Slough—its confusion, its commercial crudity, its eagerness, its accomplishment, its hurry, the gay girl, whose youth reflected the energy, but whose beauty was so far above the futility ; and through everything the March sunlight, mocking—yet purifying.

The passionate brush flowed over the white paper, lines and masses crossing, harmonising, conflicting with one another. Speed was the thing—the speed of Slough and of the West Road. A brilliant top of a red bus, now a green coach half across it—wheels everywhere and nowhere

—the policeman's huge hand (not, of course, the policeman himself—he didn't matter), dogs as little streaks, always in the way. Advertisements capitals, many-hued, falling about, and then the girl in the blue jersey ; a brilliant wash, clean, strong, right in the middle of the picture—her youth—her energy—and through and across everything, the rays of sunlight, mocking, yet making gay and worthwhile.

Finished ! Harold put the drawing up and stared at it. He hadn't paused for an instant, but now he looked at it steadily and for a long time—far longer than he had taken to produce it. He added one or two vivid touches and then set it on the mantelpiece.

'It's good,' he said, 'it's the best I've done.'

He washed the brushes, smoothed his ruffled hair and then went to his cupboard and took some drawings out of a portfolio. He looked carefully at them—glancing from time to time at the new one. There was the grey-toned impression of the Great West Road in rain, the rather cruel one of the famous view from Richmond Hill and the somewhat more orthodox drawing of his own shop from the other side of the road, with his father's spectacles across the whole front, because he always thought of him in this way when he was going in. These and some others he packed carefully and then crept downstairs, after glancing just once more at the 'Girl in the Blue Jersey ;' stole his father's car and went to London.

For there he had an artist friend, and the artist had a critic friend, of modern tastes.

Despite a visit to the local Woolworth, Mrs. Dawkins returned a little ruffled from her shopping expedition. True she had temporarily forgotten her annoyance while enjoying that most exhilarating experience, hard indeed for

the lowest spirits to withstand. Nevertheless she recollect ed that extraordinary encounter with her son when she reached the spot where it had occurred. How differently indeed she saw that corner from the maze of lines and patterns that it was to Harold ! To her it was a place of broad shop-fronts, some well kept—others less so ; some on the upgrade, others declining ; and people consisted of those she knew, at least by sight, and strangers.

Inside she sought Mr. Dawkins, but he was nowhere to be seen. The shop was empty, the room behind it was empty. Some elemental, perhaps specially female, instinct persuaded her that something was not quite as usual at Dawkins & Son, Grocers. The same kind of underlying urge that guided the fantastic pencil in the case of Harold now led the feet of Mrs. Dawkins up the narrow stairway to the small top room. And there sure enough was Mr. Dawkins standing sheepishly among the paints and brushes. His spectacles were awry, his limp arms hung loosely by his side as he faced the opening door. Mrs. Dawkins had a vague feeling that she had once seen her husband look like that before, soon after they were married, but the occasion was forgotten and it had certainly not been repeated. Reflection being a detestable occupation, Mrs. Dawkins spoke instantly :

‘What are you doing?’ she asked. Her tone was suspicious.

‘It’s awful !’ said Mr. Dawkins, ‘there’s Mrs. Brookes gone over the other side and come back with her basket full ; and then a stranger come in, ask for butter and said he’d go to Baker, Baker.—Things aren’t right. And I can’t ’elp thinkin’ it ’as something to do with ’Arold.’

Mrs. Dawkins’ mouth slitted more than ever.

‘That doesn’t explain what you’re doin’ up ’ere,’ she said.

And neither did it. But this was in fact what had happened.

Mr. Dawkins, examining his ledger, had found that profits were steadily decreasing, declining for the first time in all the years he had had the shop. He had compared this week with last week, and both weeks with the fortnight before. The last six months showed the barest margin of profit and were not to be compared with the corresponding period of last year. And then, looking out, he had seen Mrs. Brookes cross the road and go to that new-fangled chap opposite, who put numbers in his window in connection with some kind of queer competition. Free stuff ! Downright dishonest, Mr. Dawkins called it. And Mrs. Brookes, too, who had known his father, before they had had the proud title of Dawkins & Son ! Certainly she had looked sheepish enough as she had crept home on the far side of the road, but what consolation was that ? And then, as if that wasn't bad enough, a new customer, who had inquired the price of butter ! Naming it, Mr. Dawkins had rubbed his hands pleasantly together and leaned across the counter gazing amiably over his spectacles at his new friend. But the new friend had made him jump so that the said spectacles had fallen off altogether and rattled down among the biscuit tins.

' Robbery, sir ! ' he cried, ' nothing but robbery ! You ought to be in prison—I shall go to Baker & Baker ! '

And in a trice he was out of the shop. Then Mr. Dawkins fell to thinking, almost as difficult and unusual an occupation with him, as it was for his wife.

What was the matter with everything—and above all what was the matter with Harold ? Why didn't he pull his weight, Harold, who had had a good education so that he could take up a profession and become a gentleman ? If he wasn't going to be a gentleman ; why on earth didn't he help in the shop ? Instead, he did neither. He just hung

about scribbling, saying every day that he had heard of a job, commercial advertising or something of that sort, and then coming back and saying that he hadn't got it after all. And why hadn't he? Because he wouldn't draw things right. He could, but he wouldn't. If he would paint a pretty girl, for instance, just getting out of her bath, holding a nice cake of soap, or something like that! But he drew things all wrong; without any shape at all, and *of course* no one wanted them. And now if he hadn't taken the shop car and gone off to London, and very likely he wouldn't be back all night.

Wrath rising, Mr. Dawkins had sought the upper room. On the mantelpiece stood the picture of the girl in the blue jersey. Mr. Dawkins went close and peered at it. He looked at it with his spectacles, and without his spectacles. 'And what should that advertise, I should like to know?' he muttered. 'Where's the rest of the policeman? And why has the girl no feet and what's this car showing through the bus, and all them silly little specks?'

And then, suddenly, something happened. A hand tore the picture from the mantelpiece. The inward urge of Mr. Dawkins overwhelming him, he cast the gay painting on the floor, stamped on it, tore at it, tore and stamped, stamped and tore till there was nothing left but little bits of paper and little bits of cardboard, tiny fragments of bright colour littering the floor. And then suddenly overcome by shame, Dawkins stooped, and, tidy even at such moments, collected every portion, until he had put the last fragment in the waste-paper basket.

'Don't matter,' he muttered guiltily, 'it wasn't nothing—nothing at all!'

And so, turning, he met the small shrewd eyes of Mrs. Dawkins, and remembered, as she had done, that there had

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once been an occasion of this kind before, only he was more certain that that occasion had not been a pleasant one. Because he could not entertain that memory, or answer those shrewd eyes, and also perhaps because confession is good for the soul, the story was soon told and the soothing, acquiescent words awaited, 'Well, John, it wasn't nothing.'

But Mrs. Dawkins didn't say them. She didn't play her part. Strange to say, she thought it *was* something; very much so!

'You didn't ought,' she said, 'to take the boy's things, and tear them up. They belong to 'im after all. 'E did them. If they're to be torn up, 'Arold should do it 'issel. It may be a picture all the time, for what you know.'

'Well, but look, dear!' said Mr. Dawkins coaxingly, 'look 'ow it went!'

He made strange futile gestures in the air.

'That 'uge 'and!'

'Uge 'and?' said Mrs. Dawkins severely. 'What on earth are you talking about, John?'

'I'll show you,' said Mr. Dawkins.

Seizing a block that lay on Harold's table, he put it before him on the easel. Then he filled one of the brushes with red paint from the palette and made a great slash across the page.

'There you are, that's a bus!' he cried.

'And 'ere's another!'

A splash of green followed, pouring from the opposite side till it merged into the red, making a nondescript blur lower down.

'That's a car perhaps!' he added with vigorous irony.

'And 'ere,' continued Mr. Dawkins, filling a third brush in his excitement, "'ere are some dogs!' Little lines and dots peppered the paper below.

'And this, of course, is advertisin'.'

Mrs. Dawkins' astonished eyes beheld giant capitals in reds and yellows falling about anywhere over the page.

'And now for the 'and ! Oh ! yes, the 'and.'

Enormous flesh-coloured fingers, shapeless and wide-apart, appeared in the middle of the picture.

'No body 'e 'as. Oh ! of course, no body !'

Mr. Dawkins' English was suffering severely under the strain of his new rôle as painter.

'And nah,' he declared in stridently ironic tones, 'nah for the lady—yes nah for what he's pleased to call a girl.'

The brilliant blue jersey was indicated somehow, the brown skirt, the red blob for a face.

'And, of course, no legs ! Oh ! no, legs don't matter. As if anyone ever walked without 'em !'

'Well, there you are—there's the picture !' gasped Mr. Dawkins finally, both himself and the brushes exhausted.
'Naa, what abaat it ?'

'Put it on the mantelpiece, Mr. Dawkins,' said his wife in level tones. 'Perhaps when 'Arold comes 'ome 'e'll think it's 'is.'

'Don't care if he do,' answered Mr. Dawkins recklessly, 'and anyway it's no worse. Perhaps he'll think again when he sees anyone can do that rubbish.'

'We'll see when 'e comes 'ome,' said Mrs. Dawkins darkly.

But Harold didn't come home. He didn't come home that night, nor all the next day, and Mr. Dawkins began to feel more and more uneasy when the first lights appeared in the streets. And then the shop door opened, and not Harold, but a stout stranger came in.

He spoke with an American accent and had the genial friendliness of the race.

'No thanks!' he said in answer to the grocer's polite enquiry, now couched in his best English.

'I've an unusual mission to make and maybe you can help me out. I've come for a picture.'

Mr. Dawkins stared.

'You've an artist son,' went on the American, 'and they tell me he's got a fine thing upstairs, a noo work, the "Girl in the Blue Jersey" they say he calls it. Here, see this!'

He handed a note in Harold's writing.

'Please give bearer my new picture. It's on the mantelpiece. He will pay for it. I shall be back to-morrow.
HAROLD.'

Mr. Dawkins wanted to make some kind of explanation, but the words would not come. Instead he stuttered something about 'upstairs, top room.'

'Oh, that's O.K., sure! No trouble. Just lead the way, Mr. Dawkins! I'm used to stairs. Now, I've been—'

The protesting grocer found he was being hustled up the darkening stairway, the hefty American, cigar in mouth, close at his heels, talking all the time.

'I've got to have a show. Bought some good little pieces in Paris . . . Just want something to complete. I asked them in London to put me on to one of your younger men. . . . Yeah, I know, not famous yet, but will be, they tell me.'

Inside the room the American spotted the work at once. He spread out a protesting hand. 'Don't bother with the lights. I can see!'

He drew nearer and regarded the painting through puffs of smoke from his huge cigar. Then he slapped Mr. Dawkins on the back and laughed heartily.

'Swell!' he cried. 'Just what I wanted! Something a

bit extreme. Latest style in British art. Now what'll you take for it? Thirty pounds I think they named in town.'

He drew a small book from his pocket and consulted it.

'But, but,' gasped Mr. Dawkins, 'I really don't know. I—I . . .'

'Well, say here, I'm no crook, what about forty, then?'

'But, sir,' protested the unfortunate grocer, 'the boy's not here. I really don't know if he would—'

'Well, look, mister, I *want* the thing. Name your price and we'll settle right now!'

'It's—it's—well, the fact is I don't know if the boy would want to sell it, if he—if he saw it again—not that—'

'Is that so? Well, then, we won't quarrel. Make it fifty guineas. Two hundred and fifty dollars! That's fair enough! And it's my last word.'

The American took out a cheque-book and a pen.

'Get a move on, pal, I've got to get to Noo York.'

'Going to New York, *now*?' queried Mr. Dawkins, his gaze steadyng for the first time.

'Right now!' said the American. 'I won't be seeing your son. Wish him the best from me, and tell him this'll hang in America and show the world that England's coming along all right.'

With an 'O.K. So Long!' the cheque was thrust into Mr. Dawkins' still hesitating hand, the picture seized unwrapped, and before Mr. Dawkins' brain had fully cleared, the car was roaring away down the Great West Road.

'Well, did you sell it, Father?' cried Harold as he dashed into the shop next day.

Without a word Mr. Dawkins withdrew the cheque from his pocket.

Harold seized it.

' Father, well done ! How too, too marvellous ! What a head you've got ! I knew I could trust you when it came to business ! '

Harold went on to say that artists ought to appreciate business men—that it would be much better if they did, that he was sorry he had not done so before, and that he would do so in future—in fact, he had never spoken so nicely or indeed at such length to his father before.

' And look here, Dad ! This is even better than the cheque.'

He handed a cutting from an evening paper. It proclaimed that the ' Girl in the Blue Jersey,' a new work by the well-known member of the group of left-wing British Artists, Mr. Harold Dawkins, had been bought by the American Millionaire and Art Patron, Mr. Cyrus O. Bosher, to represent the latest phases of British Art in his forthcoming show in New York.

' I'm made, Dad ! ' laughed Harold, ' and I hope I'll be able to make you, too ! '

' You didn't ought to 'ave done it, Mr. Dawkins,' said Mrs. Dawkins in answer to ominous creakings of the bed that night, ' and if you 'ad 'ave done it, you didn't ought to laugh.'

But Mr. Dawkins did laugh all the same. He laughed on and off at strange unaccountable moments for the rest of his unexpectedly prosperous life.

ALEXANDER I's VISIT—JUNE 1814:

JOURNAL OF LADY MARY LONG.

LADY MARY LONG was the eldest daughter of the seventh Earl of Northesk. Born in October 1779, she married in 1810 Mr. Walter Long of Preshaw, Hants, and Muchelney, Somerset. He is constantly referred to in this Diary as 'Mr. Long,' according to the custom in those days, although they had then been married over four years.

Lord Northesk, who was a Rear-Admiral of England and Admiral of the Red, took a prominent part in the quelling of the 'Nore Mutiny' in 1797, and was subsequently third in command (in the 'Britannia') at Trafalgar. He was a nephew by marriage of Lord St. Vincent.

It was no doubt owing to the friendship of Northesk with the Regent that there is no mention, in this account of the visit of the Allied Sovereigns, to the hissing of the Prince which took place on his public appearances, and which is referred to with such emphasis by Lady Charlotte Bury and other diarists. Lady Mary appears to belittle the Princess of Wales, who in reality held the affection of the mob at this time, and there is nothing to show, in her description, that all the cheering and rejoicings at this time were solely intended for the visiting Tsar and the ever-popular Blücher.

Even if biased, however, this short Diary is the simple and vivid account by a young Society woman of a stirring contemporary event, and, as such, is of certain historical interest.

G. M. BARNES.

JUNE 1814.

On Friday the 3rd of June we took a sudden resolution of going up to Town to see the entry of the Emperor of Russia¹ which was generally supposed would have been a public one. We accordingly set off on Sunday morning early and reached London by five, and were fortunate enough to get good rooms at Harman's Hotel.

Monday. Mr. Long went to King St., Portman Square, to see the Wetman's Platow : three horses, a chestnut, a grey, and a white one marked with an 'O,' which had carried him fifteen years : he gave him to the Regent. There were eight Cossacks there who lived all together in one room, and would not allow any person to disturb them, one of them with a long beard came into the stable whilst Mr. Long was there : he had long blue trousers, a leathern belt round his waist, in which he carried his pistol. They throw pails of water over their horses every morning and then scratch them down with their hands. I went to see Hogarth's paintings at the British Gallery, which far exceeded my expectations, and then the balloon and car at the Pantheon, which together cost a thousand pounds.

Tuesday. Mr. Long went in the carriage to take his station opposite Whitehall in order to see the entrance of the Emperor. At once, Lady Clanricarde sent for me, she had an order to admit her party into Whitehall Chapel, but when we arrived there we found every window either full, or else occupied by some *Dragons* who were keeping them for people who were expected. After scrambling over the pews and tumbling over the rafters (for the Chapel was repairing for the Concerts) I was completely tired, and seeing no chance of my party placing themselves to their

¹ Alexander I.

satisfaction I left them, and squeezed myself into the corner of a window at the top of the Chapel, which would not open. In the meantime Mama and my sisters got into our carriage which was immediately opposite and much I wished to be with them. But after I had sat there sometime, to the vast annoyance of some Scotchwomen, Lady Clanricarde sent to inform me that she had the offer of a window, provided we would each pay ten shillings, which we accordingly did, and were very agreeably situated with the French Eagles which were there deposited. The party shut up in this little room were, the Duchess of Sussex, Princess Augusta, Lady Dunmore and one of her grandchildren, Lady Clanricarde and daughter, myself, Lord Archibald Hamilton, and Col. Christie.

The Duchess of Sussex made Lord A. H.'s apologies for a speech he had made when I was walking about in the Chapel by myself.

The Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia¹ arrived incog. in a very shabby travelling carriage : a curious-looking man with a beard sat on the box. We were told he was the Emperor's coachman and that he constantly goes about with him. The crowds of people and carriages were so great, that their carriage was stopped some time, people supposing them to be some of the attendants.

The guns were soon after fired, and we were assured on good authority that they were arrived, but we were not willing to believe it and staid some time longer. When we got into the carriage Col. Christie made us all get out again in a great hurry, as there was a report that the Emperor was coming. We tumbled upstairs, knocked some of the workmen down, and got to our windows again, when we saw another plain looking carriage arrive. We began to be

¹ Frederick William III.

very hungry, and were fortunate enough to get some porter and biscuits.

About six, Mr. Thos. Ferrers came under the windows and told me that Mama and Mr. Long were going home. I went down to him, walked to Parliament St. where we crossed over and joined them. I never saw anything like the number of carriages and people, every house in London was almost empty, numbers went without any dinner that their servants might see this famous sight.

Papa had got Mr. Coutts' box at the Opera, so as soon as we had eat something, we went there. Madame Fernando was the principal actress and performed very well.

The Princess of Wales came in, and evidently wished to attract notice, but without effect.

Wednesday morning we drove into Piccadilly where we soon saw the Emperor going to visit the Regent. He was dressed in scarlet with very large epaulets. He is very fair and rather bald, his eyes are small but have a very arch expression : he looks remarkably healthy. We saw Blücher drawn up Bond St., he seemed to enjoy it very much.

We afterwards saw the Emperor and the Duchess of Oldenburgh¹ going in state in a glass carriage drawn by cream-coloured horses and preceded by a party of the Queen's Bays. He bowed constantly as he passed. The Duchess is a pretty looking woman, very fair and rather thick lips. In the evening I drank tea with Mrs. Milner ; Mama sent her carriage for me and as soon as I got out the axle tree broke.

Thursday. I saw the Emperor in St. James's St., going to Cumberland House. He was accompanied by a party

¹ Sister of the Tsar.

of the Queen's Bays and his carriage was drawn by beautiful black horses.

That night Anne, Papa, Mr. Long and myself went into the Pit at the Opera, in the hopes of seeing some of the great people. The Opera was remarkably good, being Tramezzani's benefit, and Grassini sang delightfully and looked very handsome : her 'God save the King' is very inferior to Catalani's : it was sung with great applause when Blücher came. He handed the Duchess of York into her box. The audience were so much delighted at seeing him that the Opera was stopped for sometime. He wore the diamond medallion given him by the Regent round his neck with a blue ribbon.

The Prince of Orange¹ and Prince —, General D'Yorck, Sir Charles Stewart, Lord Burghersh and numbers of foreigners were in the house : most of them had the order of Alexander Newski.² The performance was several times interrupted from the general idea that the Emperor was coming.

Blücher was clapped repeatedly and obliged to come forward and bow. He was very much amused at some young ladies in the next box looking at him. He has a trick of always netting his fingers and stroking his whiskers which I do not much admire. Being the first night of the illuminations we thought our horses might be frightened by the squibs and crackers and therefore returned in a hackney coach, which broke down in Swallow St. We were sometime before we could make the man stop, for he went on very quietly dragging the coach over the ground in spite of our earnest endeavours to prevent. We walked

¹ Afterwards William II of Holland. Suitor for the Princess Charlotte.

² Russian Grand Duke of thirteenth century, and a Saint of the Church. The Order was founded by Peter the Great.

home through Cavendish St. in order to see the illumination in front of the French ambassador's house which was remarkably pretty.

Friday we went to the Exhibition which I thought a bad one : most of the rooms were darkened for the illuminations, so that we could not see the miniatures. From there we proceeded to the Panorama of Vittoria, which was so crowded it was almost impossible to see it : and I almost fought a battle with a woman there, who stuck her elbows into my sides till I was quite sore, and upon my remonstrating with her she threatened to call a *gentleman* to speak to me, upon which I told her she had better hold her tongue.

Mr. Long went to Matthew's benefit, which was very much crowded.

Saturday. I went to see the Indian jugglers and was much delighted with their clever tricks, the manner they catch the balls is wonderful. They have pleasant intelligent countenances : they were dressed in white calico jackets and trousers, with large earrings about 3 inches in diameter, and rings upon their feet. The seeing one of them swallow a sword 21 inches long, is not so disquieting as I expected. One of them, a lad of about fifteen sang a long, odd, monotonous but not unpleasant song, the whole time of their performance. They were brought over by an Indian Captain upon speculation.

In Pall Mall I saw the Emperor and Duchess of Oldenburg returning from the City in an open carriage. He was in a plain green coat and round hat. The Duchess had a very high bonnet and plume of feathers. We waited some time in Stable Yard in hopes of seeing the King of Prussia, who dined at two o'clock, but he drove off through the Park, by which means we missed him. We were to have met a party at Papa's before we went to the Opera,

but he told us that the doors would be opened much earlier than usual and that we had better go immediately. We accordingly got a mouthful and set off at $\frac{1}{2}$ past five and waited till the doors opened at $\frac{1}{4}$ past six. We then got out and went in with the rush. Mr. Long soon lost his hat, and my shawl was carried off, but we were fortunately not separated till I was driven up against an iron railing with one of my arms bent back and all the pressure of the people against me. I felt my breath almost gone several times, and that unless I made a desperate effort I must have been killed. Mr. Long in the meantime was carried on by the crowd thro' the doorway. He was so alarmed for me that he kept beseeching the people around me to save me. As soon as I could extricate my arm, which was with great difficulty, I got over the railing with the assistance of a gentleman behind me, and Mr. Long had scrambled over the pay box and received me on the other side. I then got into the turn of the bannisters on the stairs which kept off the crowd, and then climbed, or rather was dragged, over them, then over a poor woman who was thrown down. I had all my clothes torn to pieces and a violent bruise on my arm. Mr. Long had his hand cut open. The screams of the poor woman were dreadful, and I never think of it without being thankful that none of my sisters were with me, who would probably have been more frightened and consequently in greater danger. I thought hardly anything short of a miracle could have saved my life, and that I should never see my little girls any more. We had then got into the passage leading to the private boxes and Mr. Long hurried me on to the Pit (I was almost fainting with pain and fright), where we got an excellent seat close to the orchestra. I got my arm tied up and a little brandy to apply to it. I was such a miserable crazy figure that had I not

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thought that people would be too much taken up by the great people to look at me, I should have been a good deal distressed, for as to getting out, that was quite impossible. I saw a gentleman attempt it, but he was obliged to return. However I got two or three good *stares* and no wonder, for I looked just come out of Bedlam.

There was a dreadful row : the people were clamourous for stage room, and broke into some of the boxes, one of which was the Duchess of Richmond's. I expected to have been killed. The Manager was called for, who made his appearance, but they did not know what to say to him when he came. Some did not like the Opera to go on till the great people arrived. Whenever Grassini sang she was mimicked, which she bore with great good humour. Nothing could pacify them till the Emperor, the King of Prussia, and the Regent arrived, which was about ten o'clock. The sight amply repaid us for all we had gone through. '*God save the King*' was sung by the *whole house*, and the applause was so great it was some time before the Opera could proceed.

The Emperor sat on the Regent's left hand and the King of Prussia on his right. They *did not bow* to the Princess of Wales, who was in her own box opposite with Lady Anne Smith and Lord Archibald Hamilton. I remarked the King of Prussia's sons, the Prince of Orange, Prince of Wirtemburgh, Duke and Duchess of York, Duke of Cambridge, Duke of Clarence, Prince —, Blücher, Barclay de Tolly, General D'Yorck, Count Metternich, Duchess of Wellington, Sir Charles Stewart, Lord Burghersh, Lord Castlereagh,¹ and many foreigners whose names I did not know. The Hymn to the Emperor was beautiful. They stayed till the end of the Opera. We got away without

¹ Foreign Secretary. Afterwards Marquess of Londonderry.

any difficulty, but were obliged to walk home : and very cold it was. The next day, *Sunday*, I went nowhere except to church, and to pay a few visits ; I was afraid of the crowd in the Park which was very great, but my sisters got a famous view of them all on horseback.

Monday. We saw the Emperor and the Grand Duchess going to dine with the Regent at eight o'clock : they looked exceedingly merry.

Tuesday. We left Town about two o'clock, and having a new carriage the wheels heated so often we could get no further than Bagshot where we slept. That night was the most tremendous storm of thunder and lightning I ever remember. We got home next day, and recruited myself for the fatigues of *Portsmouth*, where we went on *Monday* the 20th.

Portsmouth. June the 20th. We were a large party, consisting of Papa, Mama, two sisters, two cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Cook, Mrs. Hulford, ourselves and my little girl Alice. Only five bedrooms to contain us all, women servants included, but we packed as well as we could and were a very jolly party. We went to see the rooms fitted up for Blücher, they were very neat but nothing particular. They were at the Bank immediately opposite our lodgings, commonly called the 'Dog and Kettle,' at the bottom of the High St. We had a very fine view from our windows of Spithead. After dinner we went on board the *Royal Sovereign Yacht* (Sir Edward Bury) and saw the bed in which Louis the 18th slept soundly during the passage from Dover to Calais,¹ which was two hours and a half. The Duchess D'Angouleme² was ill the whole time and had no female attendant. Dr. Outram was with her all the time.

¹ Louis went below and fell asleep directly he boarded the yacht, leaving the Duc de Bourbon to take his place on deck and acknowledge the farewells of the Regent.

² Daughter of Louis XVI.

Tuesday. We saw 35 led horses arrive. We went to the Government House which was preparing for the Regent : his pillows, bolster and mattress were of white satin. There were immense deal tables in two of the long rooms where the Regent dined, the tablecloth being never taken off. The lustres in these rooms were quite beautiful : all the rooms were newly papered and very damp. Mama and my sisters went to Commisioner Grey's, to see the preparations there for the Emperor, but very little was done to the house. The Emperor slept in a very small bed, and the Duchess of Oldenburgh carries her bedding about with her and sleeps upon a sofa. When the servants arrived they disarranged everything, flew into dreadful passions, and began spitting about on the carpets. They put a dirty Russian footman into Miss Grey's bed. The King's servants would not do anything, nor the Russians, therefore the Commisioner's servants were obliged to do all the work, and sit up all night. There were several men cooks and scullions. The Russians have no regular meals, but eat when they are disposed. There was constantly hot meat upon the table, and as soon as the joint was cut it was taken away, and another one brought.

The ships at Spithead were all formed into line and looked beautiful.

Wednesday. The Regent arrived about five o'clock : when he got to the top of Portsdown Hill, all the guns from the batteries were fired. He had a strong guard with him, and was preceded by the ropemakers dressed in white, with blue ribbons. He was much applauded, and appeared in high good humour. As soon as he arrived the guns were again fired, and answered from the ships. He held a levée for naval officers directly, and I counted 84 who walked to the Government House with the Duke of Clarence. Papa dined with the Regent.

About seven we went to call on Mrs. Grey, and not finding her at home we took our station by the side of the road where the Emperor was expected to pass. It was a very rainy cold evening, and we were almost tired when the Commissioner found us out, and was good enough to let us go into his house. There were many false alarms of the Emperor's arrival : the officers on guard and in waiting were quite faint and begged some wine. I was told they had been on duty for *thirteen hours*. We stood till eleven o'clock, when the Emperor arrived with the Duchess. The Commissioner walked before them with the candles into the Drawing-room, where they stood two or three minutes and then went upstairs. The Emperor ran down again to see Lord Sidmouth,¹ Lord Melville,² Count Lieven,³ etc. Every time he passed he looked round and bowed—he then went up to tea and drank some *rum*. He was dressed in a plain blue coat and Wellington pantaloons and half boots. The Duchess had a high straw bonnet and feathers, a grey stuff gown with three rows of grey ribbon, and a brown shawl over it. She is very fair. When she went upstairs she seemed pleased with her room and said it was very comfortable. Mrs. Grey was desired by the interpreter to go up to her, and she asked her several questions, how many children she had, etc.

We then went back to Portsmouth : all the town was illuminated, and the streets as full as they could hold of people, who walked about almost all night, singing 'God save the King' and 'Rule Britannia.' We did not get much sleep, and rose a little after six, in order to be ready to go on board next morning.

Thursday. At nine o'clock we went on board the *Prince*,

¹ *Home Secretary.*

² *First Lord of the Admiralty.*

³ *The Russian Ambassador.*

Sir Richard Bickerton's ship, which was near the *Impregnable* the Duke of Clarence's. The King of Prussia breakfasted on board the *Royal Sovereign*. As soon as the procession of boats came in sight a salute of 21 guns was fired from each ship : the salute was repeated when they all got on board. The Admiralty Flag and Royal Standard were then hoisted on board the *Impregnable*. All the ships were manned. The little boats got in crowds round the *Impregnable* cheering, and the Sovereigns came forward repeatedly and bowed. We had a cold dinner on board and very hungry we were. Three or four frigates sailed about, which added greatly to the sight. We left the ship and lay upon our oars till they were nearly arrived. We saw the firing to much greater advantage than on board, and there was a *feu de joie* all round the lines which was beautiful.

The Regent landed at the Sally Port and the Emperor of Russia at the King's Stairs : we arrived there just before him. Papa was introduced and the Emperor shook hands with him. We then scampered up, at the risk of our lives, among the Guards who were prancing about in several divisions, and so we were consequently obliged to walk as fast as they rode, or we should have been run over, as there was a large party of them behind us. When we got to the Commissioner's we saw nothing except all the Navy officers going to be presented, so we walked back again, got into our boat, and were landed at the Sally Port. Papa dined at the Crown Inn, with some of the grandees. The Emperor and Duchess passed our house in the evening : they dined with the Regent. A large party of horse attended to make way for them. Blücher arrived, and was drawn by the populace. I saw a sailor dancing and hurrahing at the top of his carriage, several people attempted to pull him down, but without success. The crowds were so great that the

military had great difficulty in keeping a passage for him, and the horses of the soldiers were capering about on the pavement to keep them off; but the tars were not easily frightened, and clung to the carriage like bees.

There was a *feu de joie* and a salute fired at ten o'clock; it was rather a dark night, and the flashes from the ships, and now and then some rockets sent up, was the prettiest thing I ever saw. There was likewise a fire balloon which attracted much attention. The whole town was illuminated, but I was afraid of going to the Government House, on account of the concourse of people, and seeing a poor woman carried along with a broken leg, made me feel less inclined to venture.

Friday morning we went to the Dockyard and waited in the passage till the Emperor arrived. He met the Regent at the door of the house and handed him downstairs. The King of Prussia and sons, Duke of York, Duke of Cambridge, Counts Metternich and Lieven, Prince Gagarini, Prince of Oldenburgh, Prince of Wirtemberg, Duke of Clarence, Blücher, with Miss Fitzclarence under his arm, Lords Erskine, Sidmouth, Melville, and many others came in and stood in the vestibule, so that we were in the midst of them all.

When the Duchess of Oldenburgh came down the Emperor introduced Miss Fitzclarence to her. Mama was presented to Alexander by the Duke of Clarence as the wife of the Admiral, and the niece of Lord St. Vincent. The Regent was very ungracious to Lady Ponsonby. Count Overoff (?) who we were told strangled the Emperor Paul,¹ was there, and in high favour.

Papa introduced me to Blücher, who shook hands with me. He was almost pulled to pieces.

They all set off to see¹ the Dockyard, and we followed,

¹ Father of Alexander I.

but unluckily being immediately behind Col. Mellish who was walking with Lady Gore, he desired the Constable not to let us in to the rope-walk, but having the right to do so we attempted to pass, and the Constable was then going to knock Mr. Long down, which frightened me so much that I began to cry. I then made myself known to Lady Gore, hoping that would prevent any further impertinence, but Col. Mellish instantly began abusing Mr. Long, and said it was all his own fault and that the Constable had only done his duty. Lady Gore offered to take me in, but as I had quite as good a right to go there as she could possibly have, I declined the honour, not wishing to have any more of Col. Mellish's conversation. We then went to the King's Stairs and found most of our party who were very tired. As soon as we were all collected we got into the boat and went back to Portsmouth.

We got on board the *Ville de Paris* before the firing began. Lady Gore, Miss Fitzclarence, and Mrs. Blackwood were on board the *Impregnable*. The Emperor was ill the day before, and preferred seeing Haslar Hospital. The Regent, King of Prussia and party, first went on board the *Royal Sovereign*, and then on board the *Impregnable*, which last ship did not sail in the line in order that they might have a better view of the fleet. We sailed about fifteen miles and performed several manœuvres : I never saw so fine a sight. The wind was fortunately favourable for our return, or we should have been kept out all night. There were on board, besides ourselves, Sir H. and Lady Neale, Lady Sinclair, Mrs. Whitbey, her brother Capt. Simmonds, etc., etc. There was likewise a Polish General who had distinguished himself very highly : his name was something like Sobriski : he had fought for Buonaparte till the allies entered Paris, and was a very pleasant, gentlemanlike man.

A young officer whose name was Florentin, a Pole by birth but of Italian parents, attracted our attention by his pleasing manners. Seeing him taken no notice of I spoke to him, and he told me he had been at Moscow, and at Leipzic where he was nearly killed. He said that Paris was far from being quiet, and that he infinitely preferred London. He had often dined with Buonaparte before the Russians made war against him, and of course had a good deal of conversation. He spoke in raptures of the Archduke Constantine,¹ said that he was not so brusque as he had been, but that he was never governed by man, *woman*, or child. He said in appearance he was not like the Emperor, that he had rather large eyebrows. He likewise said the English had mistaken their attentions, that Platoff and Barclay de Tolli deserved more credit, but that Blücher's name was better known.

There were some very disagreeable Frenchmen who were very forward and behaved extremely ill : nobody knew how they got on board. We dined at $\frac{1}{2}$ past five, and then went all over the ship. There was a curious old clock which had been on the old *Ville de Paris*, in the carpenter's shop. We left the ship after the great people, and the firing from the Batteries and ships was repeated the same as the day before.

When we got home we found an invitation to a ball given by the Regent that evening at the 'Crown' : we had just time to dress and go there. We drove up to the door just before the Emperor's carriage : they made us drive on, and we were obliged to get out in the midst of a tremendous crowd, with no place to walk in but the gutter, the guards having possession of the middle of the street, and the people

¹ Brother of Alexander. Subsequently renounced his right of succession in favour of his younger brother Nicholas.

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of the pavement. We saw Lord Wellington get out of his carriage, and the guards and Constables had hard work to prevent the carriage doors being opened. When we went upstairs we saw Miss Fitzclarence standing between the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia. Lady Taxton and Miss Oliver were the only ladies in the room, and the Duke of Wellington and all the great men stood opposite.

The Emperor opened the ball with Miss Fitzclarence : I stood next with Lord Stewart, but Elizabeth, dancing with the Crown Prince of Prussia, stood above me. He asked Mama to dance, but she declined in favour of Elizabeth. Anne danced with the Prince of Oldenburgh, Martha with Prince Fredrick of Prussia, Lord Burghersh with a lady in black, Henrietta with the Hon. Col. Craven, etc. The Emperor asked for a Scotch tune, and several were played before they began, which they did to the tune of 'I'll gang no mair to your town' with hands across. The Emperor never sat down, but was attentive in turn to every person that danced.

There were about 55 couples, and when we got to the top we began again with the same tune, but a different figure. After that dance was over the Emperor took out Lady Gore : Mrs. Blackwood and Lord Stewart followed, Lady B. A. Cooper and Lord Arthur Hill, etc. The Prince of Prussia asked me to dance, but his father carried him away before it began. The Emperor came up to me, and asked me how I had hurt my arm, in English. I answered him in French that it was in running after him, and then he asked me in French whether it was '*un coup.*' As soon as that dance was over he went away, and we went to supper. The Duke of Clarence desired the Ladies would drink a bumper toast, and then gave the Prince Regent, with a speech and three times three. Next the Allied Sovereigns

three times three, Duke of Wellington three times three Papa gave the Duke of Clarence six times six, which was drunk with great applause. The Duke got up and said he hoped the next time they did him that honour he should deserve more of his country than he had hitherto done. He then gave the Ladies with three times three, and moved to go into the ballroom, where dancing began again, and when we left at four o'clock was not over.

There were there : The Emperor, King of Prussia, with his sons and nephew, Prince of Oldenburgh, Duke of Saxe Weimar, Duke of Wellington, General Blücher, Lord Stewart, Lord Burghersh, Lord Sidmouth, Lord Erskine, Lord and Lady Melville, Marquis and Marchioness of Ely, Lady Shaftesbury, Lady B. A. Cooper, Lady Dunmore, Lady Gore, Lady Taxton and Mrs. Oliver, Lord Orford, Lord Arthur Hill, Lord Yarmouth, Mrs. Ponsonby, Col. Craven, Col. Mellish, Duke of Dorset, Sir John Beresford, Sir Edmund Nash, Sir B. and Lady Bickerten, Sir Henry and Lady Neale, Mrs. Blackwood, Sir George Martin, Sir George Grey, Mrs. Heathcote, Mrs. Chute, Duke of Clarence, Miss Fitzclarence, Hon. Mrs. Fitzclarence, Capt. Warde, Capt. Simmonds, Capt. Byron, Mrs. Griffiths and daughters, Mrs. Jefferson and Miss Brown, Mrs. Dixon and Mrs. Newland, Miss Cuthbert, etc., etc., and numbers of foreigners whose names I did not know.

The Emperor said that on that day two years, the French crossed the Niemen,¹ and he then little thought he should celebrate the defeat at Portsmouth.

Next morning the Corporation waited upon the Regent and he held a Levee. We saw him set off attended by a party of horse, and he was saluted by the ships and batteries. He called upon Blücher, who was going to breakfast upon

¹ Napoleon's invasion of Russia, June 1812.

coffee : he has always a candle on the table to light his pipe by. The glass of the miniature given him by the Regent broke. When his carriage came to the door, the crowd was so great the soldiers were obliged to cut about, and the mob hissed them all down the street.

There was a review on Portsdown Hill which we did not go to.

We got home that evening, and I was glad to get a little rest after the great fatigue I had gone through.

DO YOU REMEMBER . . . ?

(To S.M.M.)

*Do you remember all the hours we've spent,
We two? How once we climbed the little hill?
The sunlit morning, filled with flowers, we went
Among the woodland trees? Remember still*

*That day the grey rain slanted down, and how
We rode through swirling mists in fading light?
Saw you the moon peep through the pine-tree bough
While we sang lovesongs to the listening night?*

*We two have watched the golden-headed sun
Climb down the sky and sink into the sea;
He's seen us walk, and swim, and leap, and run.
He's heard us reading chosen poetry.*

*In our rich happiness these have their part.
Will you not throne them always in your heart?*

H. E. WESLEY SMITH.

Adelaide,
South Australia.

SILVER SHOES.

BY LIDA GUSTAVA HEYMANN.

I.

A PERFECT LADY from the crown of her head to the sole of her silver shoes. That was her own judgment as she examined in the looking-glass her reflected image.

Her short thick hair, already a little grey, was arranged artistically to suit the fine shape of her head. It glistened like silver under the electric light. A black dress left her arms, neck and shoulders free, and flowed in beautiful lines on her slender and well-proportioned figure, and it ended in a long train everything up to date ! Her only ornament was a thin silver necklace fastened by a large blue sapphire. The stone glittered strikingly and provokingly vieing with the sparkling blue of her own bright eyes ; her feet were shod in silver shoes. Satisfied and content, she smiled at her reflection in the mirror. Everything about her person was as perfect as her attire. In fact no expert in beauty-culture, knowing all the secrets of the trade, would find it possible to believe that she was nearly fifty years old or that her dress had not come from one of the most renowned ateliers of Paris but had been made in a few hours by her own skilled hands. Her skin was perfect, the face had no wrinkles, the cheeks and lips were so discreetly coloured that even an expert might have sworn that it was the work of nature.

A joyful feeling of happiness came over her, for to-night she was to satisfy all her natural longing. She liked to meet the élite of brilliant Society and to feel herself one of them.

She laughed to think that nobody would guess that she lived in an attic with a balcony on the seventh floor in the same beautiful building in the best part of a Swiss capital, where a few years ago she had possessed a fine apartment of seven rooms on the first floor and had enjoyed all the comfort which wealth and service could give her. In those days her motor-car was at her disposal at any moment. The sudden change in her fortunes had been caused by the break-down of the dollar.

To-night there was a big Reception and dinner at the American Embassy. The whole of the Geneva diplomatic service would be there as well as eminent politicians and representatives of the International Press. At this Reception, our 'Grande Dame' would get all the first-rate political news and interesting gossip from International politicians anxious to entertain her. Suddenly awakened from this pleasant anticipation, she looked at her watch and was scared to find that it was more than time to set out for the Reception. Only a few months ago she would have rung the bell and asked the maidservant to tell the chauffeur to bring round the car, but the maidservant, the chauffeur and the motor-car had all vanished. There was no telephone in the attic ; as it was the end of the month, her budget would not allow her a taxi. There was no time now to consider what should be done for not a minute was to be lost. She quickly changed her silver shoes for solid street boots, put them into a bag and hurried into her cloak ; but another problem faced her. What about the long train ? For one moment she was baffled, then with an energetic movement, she gathered up skirt and train, hung them over her arm with the bag containing the silver shoes and flew down the staircase to the sixth floor where she was able to get the lift which did not serve people who lived in the attics. Arriving on the ground

floor, she took her bicycle and hurried like a girl of twenty through the streets of Geneva and arrived in good time.

Soon afterwards she found herself by the side of a well-known attaché Mr. 'H,' at an exquisitely equipped dinner-table surrounded with beautiful flowers, with shining silver and crystal in keeping with her sparkling spirits. The conversation with her neighbour did not halt for one moment. It ranged over Abyssinia, Italy, the League of Nations, Japan, Spain, Hitler-Germany and the entire International world. Life and excitement glowed in 'Silver Shoes.' She was conscious of the glances of many eyes resting in admiration upon her—she was in her own element. This was an evening after her own taste. She was enjoying herself immensely ; her happiness made her even more attractive.

It was long after midnight before the party broke up. Just as our 'Grande Dame' was about to take her cloak, her neighbour at the dinner-table met her and begged to be allowed to take her home in his motor-car. There was one moment of consternation, as she thought of the bag with her street boots upon her arm under the cloak and beheld the bicycle at some distance from the main road in a narrow lane. What was she to do ? The next moment our Society Queen had mastered the situation. Smiling gracious thanks she accepted the kind offer and gave the address of the fashionable building in which she lived. How could Mr. 'H' guess that a few moments after he had set her down at the entrance to her home, she was standing in her attic shaking with laughter. Quickly humming a merry tune, she changed her silver shoes for her street boots and her elegant velvet gown with its train into a simple skirt and pullover. A little while later she was walking light footed through the deserted streets of the town to recover her bicycle. She found it where she had left it six hours ago. She rode home in the

quiet night filled with the consciousness that riches alone do not make happiness—on the contrary, she realised that never before had she felt the charm of poverty as she did that night. She felt so free, so independent of everything, of service, of comforts and of all that money could buy. Never had she been so self-reliant as she was at that moment. That evening seemed to bring back the happy days of childhood when she played many tricks upon the solemn grown-up world, and her successful escapade gave her the feeling of mischievous joy. She had no feeling of regret for the change that had occurred in her circumstances. As she arrived home, put her bicycle away and climbed up the staircase that led to the seventh floor, for of course it was far too late for the lift to be working, she entered her tiny attic and opened the door to the balcony. She looked up to the night sky with its millions of sparkling stars in measureless space. She was overpowered with the immensity of beauty of the heavens which she had never seen like that when she lived in her beautiful first-floor apartment. Standing under the stars, her solitude, her complete independence gave to her a new hitherto unrealised joy. There was nothing in the world to hamper her, she was absolutely free and entirely at one with the universe. The wonder of that moment overcame her. Life was a miracle. In complete inward calm and happiness she gave one more worshipping look to the beautiful heavens, then lay down and slept a dreamless happy sleep until the sun brought her a joyous awakening.

THE WAYFARING TREE.

*In the full warmth of May,
Ere shining hedgerows all with dust are dimmed,
While yet the lengthening day
Doth for awhile delay
His triumph of the solstice,—then all brimmed
And foamed with blossom like a creaming sea
The pale wayfaring tree
Makes all the hedgeside and the season sweet.*

*But later, when the wheat
No more is green, but from the strengthening sun
Takes its first tinge, and half July is done,
While all about the hedges wantonly
Red bryony and the woody nightshade run ;
Then, following the swift season faithfully,
The dark wayfaring tree,
Her blossoms shed,
And all with scarlet jewelled berries spread,
From the dimmed hedgerow shines exultantly.*

*The year moves on ; the hangers darken down
To duskier hues of August ; the hedge wears
No bloom save where the lesser umbels blow
Of the swart dogwood ;—and now tawny brown
And rustling dryly to the faintest airs
The waiting cornfields shudder, and at night
And under moonless skies of Autumn, glow
And shimmer with their strange and inward light.*

Still moves the year ; the corn is reaped, and still
Sprout the harsh bents upon the stubbled hill.
Too faithful tree ! For now the enfeebled year
With wistful face moves slowlier on to death ;
In every wind doth sound a dying breath ;
And misted morning skies, at noonday clear,
Merge into mist again 'ere evening fall.
Now sobbing airs about the woodland call,
While with a colder and more frequent rain,
That hath all lost its thrilling scent of grass,
The cold skies weep again.

Earth sees this latest of the seasons pass ;
And the wayfaring tree,
Which now lets fall
Its harsh and brittle leaves all marbled o'er
With purple and with livid hues of death,—
In the cold breath
And frequent weeping of the Autumn airs
Now only bears
Above the hedges' wrack
Dull-rattling leaves and wrinkled berries black.

ANTHONY FFETTYPLACE.

'MRS. JANE.'

BY ELIZABETH MARY WRIGHT.

'FOR nearly sixty years faithful nurse and friend in the family of' . . . So runs the inscription on the marble kerb which outlines the grave of Elizabeth Jane Munro, who died in 1917, at the age of eighty-seven. At the foot of the grave is the text : 'God is Love.'

We still occasionally read similar testimonials in the obituary columns of newspapers, attached to the name of somebody's 'Nannie,' a pet-name that has now become a professional term for a children's nurse. We may see in another column : 'Wanted, a nannie.' But the old family nurse of whom I write was never 'Nannie,' she had too much personality to be designated by the title of a class. She belonged to another type and generation, essentially Victorian, or rather, Early Victorian. I use the word in the sense it has always had—and always will have—for me. To me it stands for a background and an abiding tradition of love and simple piety, of genuine and conscientious devotion to duty and service ; and our nurse was a shining example of those Victorian virtues and ideals. We called her Jane, or Mrs. Jane by courtesy in later years. She had previously been known as Lizzie, or Elizabeth, but that was my mother's name, so the new nurse was told that her second name of Jane must now be adopted. In those early days domestic rules were much more personal and stringent. At the outset my mother as the wife of a clergyman found it necessary to say that no servant of hers might wear flowers in her bonnet on Sundays, since such tokens of vanity must not be seen

in the pew allotted to the Parsonage staff. However, my mother was an enlightened woman, in advance of her age, and maids came, and did her bidding, and stayed with her for years.

The few details I learned about E. J. M.'s childhood I gleaned from her in her old age, and I give them here as nearly as possible in her own words, from the notes I wrote down at the time.

We were from our childhood given to understand that she belonged to 'the poor branch of the Munro family,' and that she had a clan of remote and grand kinsfolk in Scotland. She was a Londoner by birth. Her father was a cabinet-maker, who worked for a firm in Bond Street, and who lived in Howland Street, close to Fitzroy Square. Her mother had been a cook. E. J. M. was the second child. She had one sister, older than herself, and two younger brothers. 'I was always brought up to work,' she said, and her life and character showed that she was brought up in a home atmosphere of high principles, of careful thrift, and the strict but kindly discipline of old-fashioned Christianity. One glimpse she gave me of her mother's teaching :

'I went to school in Albany Street, near Regent's Park. I remember some children there, called Hunter. They were nice, but dirty, and I didn't like sitting by them. I told Mother about them, and she scolded me for saying I didn't want to sit by them.'

When E. J. M. was about nine years old, her mother died, and two years later her father married again. The step-mother had previously been a dressmaker : 'She was a very good woman. I shall always speak well of her. She taught me all she could with the needle. People wore six flounces then, and Stepmother taught me to do them—flounce upon flounce, and the cordings too.'

E. J. M. must have left school very young, for she was only ten years old when she went out into domestic service, to help an aunt. 'Aunt Jane,' she related, 'had been upper-housemaid at the Palace, where she had £9 a year. People used to think it grand to get a place at the Palace, but you didn't get high wages, not under Queen Victoria.' By now Aunt Jane must have left 'to better herself,' for she was at this time, 'upper-housemaid at Sir John Mordaunt's, in Belgrave Square,' where she was left in sole charge for nine months.

'to see to all the house-cleaning. The people asked her if she knew of anybody to be with her, so she said she had a niece, and that was how I came to stay with her the nine months. There were some white chairs, and I had to clean them. Aunt said I had been well taught.'

After this, at the age of eleven, E. J. M. went as housemaid to some people called Dawson :

'My father knew one of the housemaids, and so he heard about the place. The housekeeper had said she would like to see me when I was fit for service. My father took me. I had a black velvet cape, lined with red. I remember it very well and the housekeeper lifted it up—like this—and said, "Well, there isn't much of her for eleven."

It was a very large house, where there were six maids, a footman, a butler, and a housekeeper. E. J. M.'s wages were £4 a year, and her clothes, 'but,' she says, 'I managed to save even then. I got up at five every morning, and there was bread and butter and some milk in the housekeeper's room for me. She was very kind to me.' The housekeeper was, nevertheless, a very strict supervisor :

'I had sometimes to do things two or three times over, if they were not properly done. It's the only way to make girls tidy. There was a copper kettle that had to be done

every day, and I had to show it to the housekeeper, and sometimes I had to polish it three times over. The work had to be done at the proper time, there was no putting it off till to-morrow. The housekeeper told me when I went there, always to be careful to sweep the dust out of the corners of the room, and the middle would take care of itself. So I left the dust all under the table in the middle of the room, and then she asked me why I had done that, so I told her that was what she had told me to do. I had a card with the work all put down that I had. I used to have to scour the boards in the housekeeper's bedroom about three times a week, and when I had finished scrubbing them, I had to take a pail of fresh water and a sponge, and wipe them all, the way of the boards. I used to hearthstone the kitchen stairs from top to bottom, and when they were dry, I used to look at them to see that they were white. Girls would find out a difference if they had nowadays to do what I did.'

In addition to all this hard work, there was

'a good deal of sewing. There were plenty of sheets to turn sides into the middle, and to patch, for the bed-linen was provided for the coachman and grooms over the stables ; and I sewed seams for the maids, in my own time that was, after six o'clock in the evening.'

The butler and the footman wore white gloves, and E. J. M. used to wash these in her own time, and they paid her a penny a pair for doing it.

One is glad to think that she was able to say when looking back to such a toilsome period of her girlhood : 'I was very happy and comfortable.' Here the reminiscences she narrated to me come to an end, and there is a long gap in E. J. M.'s known history. I cannot tell how soon she gave up housework for the nursery, nor have I ever heard any stories of babies she had nursed before she came to us. Perhaps her devotion to us soon became so absorbing that her

interest in other nurseries she had known gradually dwindled away. She once told me the story of a father of a family where she was nursemaid, who was consumptive, and by way of a remedy for his complaint he had to swallow live baby frogs before breakfast every morning. The treatment apparently was thoroughly successful, for the reason why she then recalled it was that she had just seen in a newspaper the notice of the gentleman's death in 1910, at the age of eighty-eight. She liked us to realise that she had renounced the world for our behoof. We grew up with the firm belief that, but for a succession of babies in this our home, she would have married a dashing young red-coated officer she had met and danced with at an Artillery Ball in the dim past. I believe this was pure legend, but it provided food for the young imagination when fairy-story books were thought to be harmful. There was also the wondrous tale of how she had once held open a gate for the Duke of Wellington, and how, though she had not liked the peremptory way in which he had commanded her to do him this service, he had turned round on his horse and said 'Thank you' to her. The reflected glory which then thrilled us is an abiding memory to-day.

It was in August, 1858, when my second brother was a month old, that my mother engaged E. J. M. as a nurse. She was then about twenty-seven, fully trained and experienced. One of her assets which had some weight with my mother, was that E. J. M. was a plain young woman, unlike her more comely predecessor, who had been wont to bestow her attention on a bevy of young men in the park or public-house instead of on the baby in her charge. My mother always kept detailed account of the household expenditure, and these old account-books show that E. J. M.'s wages for the first year—with two babies in the nursery—were £12,

raised the following year to £13. In 1869, after the birth of the seventh baby, they were raised from £16 16s. to £20, finally rising to £25 in 1882. She spent so little on herself, that her savings amounted to a considerable sum, even before this date, but she foolishly lent her capital to her brothers, and they lost it all in a commercial venture which proved a failure. She was always generous and unselfish in all her actions, because she found delight in giving, and never thought of self first. I remember once when I chanced to be the proud possessor of twopence, I was allowed to go to a neighbouring shop and purchase an egg, which I thought would do my nurse good, as she had not been well. She shared that egg with three little girls round the nursery tea-table, so the actual benefit to herself was small. In her last years, when she lived in a Home, I used to take her farthing buns, and a collection of the smallest apples and flowers from my garden, because it gave her so much pleasure to have a large number of gifts to distribute among the other patients.

My father had been appointed Perpetual Curate of Holy Trinity, Stepney, in 1855, hence, Trinity Parsonage, Coborn Road, Bow Road, London, E., was the home address we were taught as part of our individual names, but under the vigilant eye of E. J. M. there was little risk of our being lost in the streets of London. She took us every day to walk in Victoria Park. I suppose in the beginning she always had to carry the tiny baby of the family, but later there was a perambulator, like a miniature bath-chair, in which the child sat upright. The luxurious landau type of carriage had not yet been invented, or if so, it would have been much too expensive for our modest home. We had a big attic nursery, with a window at each end, and a well-scrubbed boarded floor. One of my brothers wrote to me not long ago :

'Recently at the Parsonage, I told the Incumbent that if he was ever hard up, he could take up the nursery boards, and recover the pennies we used to "borrow" from Jane in order to drop them down the cracks. Penny-in-the-slot machines were not invented. The modern child would want something for his money.'

She was very strict about our behaviour at table. Good manners belonged to sound education, and were not to be merely an added veneer for 'company' downstairs. One of her meal-time maxims presented a serious difficulty to the young and hungry at the board : 'Those that ask shan't have, and those that don't ask don't want.' But somehow we never went empty away. Her age was a mystery we could not solve. Any leading enquiries were met by the answer : 'I'm as old as my tongue, and a little older than my teeth.' If she thought we needed a serious scolding, she gave it us loudly on the front stairs, so that my mother should know all about it. This was part of her code of honesty.

In the year 1872, when my father was told he must give up the strenuous work of an East London parish, we all went to live in the country. After one year in Somerset, near Glastonbury, we moved to the remote parish—it could not call itself a village, it was so very sparsely populated—of Tedstone Delamere, in Herefordshire, where we remained for the next twenty years. E. J. M. taught us many things of lasting value, but 'lessons' out of books she could not give us, and the time soon came when my sisters and I needed more instruction than my mother had time to give us, so, a year or two after we came to Tedstone, a resident governess was engaged. This was at first a sore trial to E. J. M., for her love was a jealous love, and she never ceased to think of us as her children, under her special care. She

had no outside interests. Indeed, there was nothing for her to do or to see on a 'day off,' for we were five miles from the nearest town, and there was not even a carrier's cart on the road. We had no horse, nor even a pony to convey anybody anywhere. We, and our cats and their families—and sometimes, in bad weather, newly-hatched chickens and ducks—had the free run of the Rectory stables to the end of our time at Tedstone Delamere. The other maids had parents or friends in the neighbourhood who could be visited on foot.—E. J. M. would have said 'on Shanks's pony'—on a 'day off,' lighted on their return by the moon in her humble role of 'the parish lantern.' E. J. M. had no country relations. She still reigned in a 'nursery,' though now that the governess taught us lessons in the dining-room in the morning, and took us for walks in the afternoon, we needed less attention from our nurse. So she bestowed some of her motherly care on the cats and the hens. These last were her special interest and pride. In the worst of weathers she would tramp out into the orchard with food at the regulation times, and her chickens never suffered from diseases due to lack of clean fresh water. She would hatch in her own bed the final eggs of a sitting, when the mother hen was bored, and had left the nest taking the hatched chickens with her. E. J. M. was always the friend of the neglected, and she loved all animals. My sister's magpie was allowed to sit perched on her cap, although he had stolen her thimble. There were always saucers of milk in a corner of the nursery for the cats, and the low window was left open at the bottom, so that the kittens could easily jump in and out when they pleased, for now our nursery was on the ground floor, looking on to the lawn and garden. Once when E. J. M. was in bed with a sick headache, my youngest sister, wishful to cheer her, carried up to her bedside a handful

of little rats, all pink and unhappy out of their nest, squirming in her palm, to show to the invalid. E. J. M. said she loved seeing them, and that it had done her so much good that she already felt better. As my sister had feared her nurse might really be dying, she too was cheered.

Now and again E. J. M. used to tell us that Tedstone was 'a dull hole,' and 'never another winter' would she spend there, but these were idle words. I can see her now, the day the telegram came to say that my father had died after an operation in London, forlornly sitting on a chair by the nursery door, with her white apron held to her eyes, sobbing out : 'How *could* I ever have said I would leave you ! How *could* I ever have said it !' And we were no longer frail nurslings, except in her imagination, for the youngest of us was by then twenty-six.

All her life she was a lover of flowers. There was a black polyanthus distributed about the Tedstone garden, the original root of which came, via the Somerset vicarage, from a penny plant E. J. M. had bought off a barrow in the East End of London.

The old family servant is sometimes a source of discord in a household, but E. J. M. gained respect in the kitchen, and one or two of the young maids became her lifelong friends. She acted as bridesmaid to the Tedstone housemaid who married the village blacksmith, and in accordance with local custom she sat with the bridal pair in the front pew in church the Sunday after the wedding.

Her London upbringing had not infected her speech with a Cockney accent, though she had the usual Cockney gift of repartee. Many of the expressions she commonly used are now quite out of date. When plagued by tiresome childish requests she would say : 'Go to Bath,' or 'You'll drive me to Bedlam' ; and in cases of still greater exaspera-

tion : 'I shall give your mother a month's notice.' My youngest brother recalls the retort : ' *You* want the top brick of the chimney.' ' This,' he says, ' puzzled my young mind, for of the three terrors, coal-carts, dustmen, and sweep, the last was easily the most fearsome. So how could I wish him to come to the nursery to gratify my desires ?' If we refused our food, we were told : ' Then there'll be more for those that like it.' Instead of current exclamations such as ' Lor ! ' or ' Lawks ! ' which she would have considered low and vulgar, E. J. M. said ' Good Night ! ' This harmless ejaculation, if repeated by us downstairs, could not entail reproof from our parents, nor shock the most fastidious maiden aunt. Outdoor clothes for herself were termed ' bonnet and shawl,' even when the latter had been replaced by a jacket or mantle. I do not think the bonnet ever gave way to a more modern hat. ' Best ' clothes were ' Sunday-go-to-Meeting ' garments, or ' my best bib and tucker ' ; and something very new was fit only ' for high-days and holidays and bonfire-nights.' When she went by train, she would travel ' Parliamentary,' a term now confined to dictionaries, dating back to ' 7 and 8 Vict.,' when, by an Act of Parliament, every railway company was ' obliged to run daily each way over its system ' one train at a penny a mile. A candle was a ' tolly-dip,' even if not made of tallow. We used to buy the genuine article at the one and only village shop when we lived in Somerset. I remember the bunches of these candles hanging up by their wicks, and they lighted us to bed. E. J. M.'s expression for a difficult situation with which to cope, an awkward job to tackle, was : ' Well, this *is* a job of journey-works ! ' And a puzzling dilemma might be ' a pretty kettle of fish.' A job of little consequence she might take up with the remark : ' Well, whilst I'm doing that, I'm doing nothing else.'

Anything askew would be said to be 'All on one side, like Bridgnorth election.' According to the *English Dialect Dictionary* this phrase belongs only to Worcestershire and Shropshire, so E. J. M. may have picked it up at Tedstone, which was close to the borders of Worcestershire. She was a traditional Anglo-Saxon in her use of negatives : 'Don't never tell me,' ' You didn't ought,' ' You hadn't any ought.' As an expert with her needle, she was critical of poor workmanship in the art of plain sewing. ' That must have been done with a broken needle and a burnt thread,' she would say of a hem or seam which had come undone. Her own work was automatically neat and fine, even when her eyesight was failing in old age.

It was after the death of my father in 1893, when my mother was living at West Kirby, in Cheshire, that E. J. M. broke her leg by falling on the floor in her bedroom. It was an added grief to her that the accident had occurred in this unexpected fashion, because she had been keeping to the house that winter, for fear of slipping on frosty roads, and becoming a source of trouble to my mother and sisters if she should injure herself by a fall. Doctors said she would never be able to walk again, but though the bone would not unite properly, and the patient would not use crutches, she did manage to walk, even if lamely, for yet another twenty-five years. She liked to tell us that she had ruined her health with sleepless nights when we were tiresome babies, but she had really a strong and wiry constitution in her small frame, and when she died, it was from sheer old age, and not from any disease.

When the family home was broken up, after my mother's death, E. J. M. lived with my sisters who were working in London, and later she lodged with a former cook, married and settled in London. But the time came when, after she

had had a serious stroke, we felt she must not be alone any more, and that the only thing to do was to place her in some Home where she would always be under skilled supervision. So she came to the St. John's Home and Hospital in Oxford, where she was under the care of the All Saints' Sisters. From there she could often come to see me, and when she was unable to do that, I could visit her. Naturally she felt the change rather a hardship at first, but the Sisters were kind and considerate, and there were other fairly able-bodied patients like herself, and she soon grew accustomed to life in a community where there were very few rules, a big garden, and all possible freedom. She had the Old Evangelical hatred of anything in religious observances which savoured of 'popery,' and she would have been miserable if obliged to attend High Church services on week-days. Simple family prayers read daily in the wards gave no offence, and only preserved a form of worship to which she had been accustomed. If she had a grievance against the regime, she complained about it openly to the Sisters. She would not utter a fault-finding word behind anybody's back. She had always been a reader, and now books were her great resource, and I had an almost unlimited supply of novels and story-books amassed by my husband when collecting material for the *Dialect Dictionary*. She spent her days contentedly reading and sewing by a cheerful fire in the big dining-room; or, in summer, she strolled in the garden in her Herefordshire sun-bonnet. Indoors she wore a lace cap with a ribbon bow in the front of it, and a sateen apron—usually black, or black with white spots on it—changed to a silk one on Sundays.

For some years she was able every summer to pay a visit to the blacksmith's wife at Tedstone, and then gradually she became less and less active. Finally, after about fourteen

years at the Home, a series of slight strokes led her gently towards the gate of death. She was losing her grip on everyday life, and present surroundings. The horrors of the Great War left her untouched. I only once found her in a sad mood, and that was before her mind was completely wrapt in old memories : 'I want to go and work for Mrs. Lea, and they say I'm too old.' It was only a fleeting phase, before consciousness of age and infirmity left her for good, and her mind went back to live over again the happy days in the nursery of long ago. She babbled of babies. I used to sit by her bedside and listen, and watch for the happy smile on her face when she had coaxed a fretful baby into cheerfulness : 'There, there, don't cry, look at the pretty gee-gee !' Or, to a bigger child : 'Don't cry, it's silly to cry and not say what's the matter.' She knew what was the matter, for she turned her head towards me and said : 'It's because his mother can't give him butter. It's one-and-fourpence a pound.' And then she smiled, and looking back at her dream-child, she murmured : 'Little rascal !' and I knew she felt again her own and the little child's contentment when she had given him a large spoonful of treacle to make up for the lack of butter. Once again I heard the old familiar exclamation we knew in nursery days : 'Good Night ! What would your mother say if I gave you that ?' One saw imaged in all her unconscious ramblings the unsullied purity of her whole life, her selfless kindness, and her thought for the young and helpless. She never uttered an unkind word. Once, when she seemed to have heard somebody blame a man for theft, she said : 'Poor man ! You must remember that his wife and children were starving.' When she was not dreaming of a child on her knee, her unconscious fingers were turning down and folding hems on the edge of the sheet ; and she would thread imaginary

needles, drawing through them a long length of invisible cotton, and knotting it at the end.

As I watched day by day, seeing her physical strength slowly ebbing, I felt not so much a sense of sadness, but rather one of gladness and wonder, for here was proof positive that love is stronger than death. Often when neither the Sisters nor the doctor could arouse in her any response, so lifeless were all her bodily faculties, when I arrived and greeted her as usual with : 'How are you to-day, Mrs. Jane?' she would instantly reply in a firm voice : 'Quite well, thank you.' She heard my voice when deaf to any other sound. Her love for us remained a living thing till every atom of breath had left her mortal body, and then it passed on into another sphere of life and activity. Only a few hours before she died, when for some time she had seemed to have no consciousness left in her, I ventured to tell her that my sister Ellen had come to see her. By sheer strength of love, Mrs. Jane sat up in bed, looking round, with eyes from which all earthly power of vision had gone, to welcome her youngest child. Then, conscious only that we were beside her, all worldly things grew hushed and silent, and she slept the untroubled sleep of a babe whom his mother comforteth. And so she passed through the gate of death to the Life Immortal, to the Kingdom of the God of Love.

Modern criticism looks back on domestic service in those early days as slavery, and doubtless it often was such, but our Mrs. Jane was no slave, one might say she was a tyrant in her own domain, though ruling by love and not by fear. There was in her something of the spirit of the faithful vassal of feudal times. The children, when no longer babies, were 'the young gentlemen,' and 'the young ladies.' When my brother had scarlet-fever and young maids had to be removed from risk of infection, Mrs. Jane wept to see my sisters

scrubbing bared floors, and cleaning grates. She felt that no 'young gentleman' would marry them after they had stooped to such menial tasks, and she longed to be able to do all the work herself. She was disappointed over my engagement to an Oxford Professor, for she 'had always looked forward to Miss Lea having a butler.' Service and duty were part of her religion, and this feudal attitude meant happiness and content. Her life's work was a vocation, not merely a means of earning a livelihood. I doubt if 'money' and 'hours off' ever entered into her calculations to any appreciable extent. Yet withal there was no servility in her attitude towards 'the family,' rather, it made for pride and independence, and the growth of a strong personality. She lived the good life to the last, and, loving and beloved, when her path lay through the valley of the shadow of death, she found it all flood-lit with golden memories.

SHAKESPEARE AND NICHOLAS BRETON.

BY URSULA KENTISH WRIGHT.

THERE is considerable circumstantial evidence pointing to a friendship between William Shakespeare and Nicholas Breton, and there are many indications throughout Shakespeare's plays of Breton's literary influence. The friendship between the two writers has to a great extent been neglected by Shakespearean scholars chiefly because Breton's works are so little read to-day, but he took a very prominent position in the Elizabethan literary world, and was widely read by his contemporaries. So popular were his books that one of his prose works, *A Post with a Packet of Mad Letters*, ran into eleven editions between 1602 and 1637. There are many beautiful passages in his prose book *The Miseries of Mavillia*, the story of 'the most unfortunate lady that ever lived,' which was one of the earliest examples of the novel, but it is divided into five 'miseries' in lieu of chapters. Another of Breton's most important works was *Wit's Trenchmour, A Conference Betwixt an Angler and a Scholar*, which served as a model for Isaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*, but whereas Walton's book is a practical treatise on fishing, Breton's is chiefly metaphorical. One of his most attractive works, and the one he is best known by in the present day, is his *Fantasticks*, which consists of a series of essays describing the seasons, the months, and the hours of the day. All Breton's books abound in shrewd character sketches of men in every walk of life, combined with exquisite pen pictures of the countryside and the

everyday life of the Elizabethans. He also wrote many long poems on religious or allegorical themes and some exquisite lyrics. The principal facts pointing to a friendship between Shakespeare and Breton are that some verses addressed to Breton were signed 'W. S.'; that there are a remarkable number of identical passages in their works; and that they had mutual patrons and friends. Their common meeting ground was very probably in the house of the Countess of Pembroke, who was Sir Philip Sidney's sister and the mother of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Philip, Earl of Montgomery to whom Heminge and Condell dedicated the First Folio, in which dedication it is stated that Shakespeare received 'much favour' from them in his lifetime. Breton appears at one time to have been a member of the Countess's household; one of his poems was entitled 'The Countess of Pembroke's Passion,' and he dedicated to her 'A Pilgrimage to Paradiso with the Countess of Pembroke's Love'; 'The Ravisht Soule and the Blessed Weeper,' and a book of prayers called *Maries Exercises*. Aubrey describing the Countess's house wrote: 'In her time Wilton House was like a college, there were so many learned and ingenius persons.' In the circle at Wilton there was a connection of the family named William Herbert who was a poet and a great patron of literature. To him Breton dedicated his 'Wit's Trenchmour' in 1597—'To the right Worshipful and noble minded, the favorer of learning and nourisher of vertue, William Harbert of the Red Castle¹ in Mountgombryshiere, Esquire,' and he is shown to be a well-known patron of literature in these words: 'I have often heard of the nobleness of your own spirit, as well in regard of the learned, as favourer of the virtuous.'

¹ Now Powis Castle.

It is quite probable that this William Herbert was the same 'Mr. W. H.' to whom Shakespeare dedicated his sonnets. I suggested this possibility in a paper on Nicholas Breton which I read to the Elizabethan Literary Society in 1927, the same idea occurred to an American, Mr. Ulric Nesbit who has made extensive researches into the life and family of Mr. William Herbert (later Sir William), and set out a very convincing case in a book published in 1936 called *The Onlie Begetter*. William Herbert's age fits in with the noble youth of the sonnets, he was born in 1572 so he would have been twenty-six years old in 1598 when we have the first record of the sonnets in Francis Mere's *Palladis Tamia, Wit's Treasury*, in which he mentions 'mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare' and his 'sugred sonnets among his private friends.' Herbert's father died in 1594 which date fits in with the line in Sonnet 13 : 'You had a father : let your son say so.'

In Sonnets 78 to 86 a rival poet is mentioned who has supplanted Shakespeare in his Patron's esteem, and it is very likely that this poet was Breton, although some scholars have accepted the theory that it was Chapman.

In Breton's poems entitled *Melancholic Humours* there is this verse called 'An Odd Concept,' which Shakespeare was apparently quoting in Sonnet 105.

*Lovely kind, and kindly loving,
Such a mind were worth the moving :
Truly fair, and fairly true,
Where are all these, but in you ?*

*Wisely kind, and kindly wise,
Blessed life, where such love lies :
Wise, and kind, and fair, and true,
Lovely live all these in you.*

*Sweetly dear, and dearly sweet,
Blessed, where these blessings meet :
Sweet, fair, wise, kind, blessed, true,
Blessed be all these in you.*

In the sonnet we have 'Fair, kind and true' printed as a quotation.

'*Fair, kind, and true,' is all my argument,
'Fair, kind, and true,' varying to other words ;
And in this change is my invention spent,
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.
'Fair, kind, and true,' have often lived alone,
Which three till now never kept seat in one.*

Unfortunately we have no *definite* proof that Mr. William Herbert and 'Mr. W. H.' were identical, though the case is a strong one. No writer has suffered more than Shakespeare from zealous scholars who have read meanings into his works—in particular the sonnets—and have attributed motives to him which had no foundation or likelihood, but were merely creations of their own highly imaginative brains. The most ludicrous of these suppositions, which I have come across, was brought forward by a learned German who interpreted the dedication of the sonnets 'To the onelie begetter of these ensuing sonnets Mr. W. H.' as 'Mr. William Himself'; to him it seemed perfectly obvious that W stood for William, H for Himself!

Shakespeare and Breton were friends of Ben Jonson's who wrote verses eulogising both writers, those to Breton were printed before his poems *Melancholic Humours*. John Florio too was a friend of Breton's to whom he dedicated, in affectionate terms, 'A Merry Dialogue Betwixt the Taker and Mistaker,'¹ addressing him as 'my very loving and

¹This dedication was prefixed to the edition of 1603, the same year in which Florio's translation of Montaigne was printed.

approved friend.' Shakespeare was evidently familiar with Florio's translation of Montaigne's Essays and borrowed from this book in *The Tempest*.

The strongest piece of circumstantial evidence of a friendship between Shakespeare and Breton is the laudatory poem signed 'W. S.' at the beginning of Breton's book *The Wil of Wit, Wits Will or Wils Wit*. This was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1580, but there is no extant copy of this date. It was again printed in 1596 and 1597, but the earliest copy at the British Museum and the one which contains these verses is dated 1599, and the probability is that they were especially written for the new edition.

AD LECTOREM, DE AUTHORE

*What shall I say of gold more than 'tis gold ;
Or call the diamond more than precious ;
Or praise the man, with praises manifold,
When of himselfe, is virtuous ?
Wit is but Wit, yet such his Wit and Will,¹
As proves ill good, or makes good to be ill.*

*Why ? What his Wit ? proceede and aske his Will ;
Why ? what his Will ? read on, and learne of Wit ;
Both good, I gesse, yet each a several ill ;
This may seem strange to those that heare of it ;
Nay, nere a whit, for vertue many waies
Is made a vice, yet Vertue hath her praise.*

*Wherefore, O Breton, worthie is thy worke
Of commendations worthie to be worth ;
Sith captious wittes in every corner lurke,
A bold attempt it is to set them forth,
A forme of Wit, and that of such a sort
As none offends, for all is said in sport.*

¹ Compare Sonnets 135, 136 and 143, with the punning on the name 'Will.'

*And such a sport as serves for other kinds,
Both young and old, for learning, armes and love ;
For ladies' humors, mirth and mone he finds,
With some extremes their patient mindes to prove ;
Well Breton, write in hand, thou has the thing
As, when it comes, love, wealth, and fame will bring.*

It is interesting to compare the first lines of the poem with *King John*, Act iv, Scene ii :

*To guard a title that was rich before,
To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
To throw a perfume on the violet.*

The date of *King John* is approximately 1598, and the verses to Breton were published a year later. *The Will of Wit* is an allegory written in the form of a dialogue between two characters named Wit and Will. It is alluded to several times in *As You Like It*, written about 1599.

Will of Wit : Wit ? Whither away ?

*As You Like It : i, ii. How now, wit ! whither wander
you ? Id. iv, i. Wit, whither wilt ?*

Will of Wit : Mountains never meet, but friends often.

*As You Like It : iii, ii. Lord ! it is a hard matter for
friends to meet ; but mountains may be removed by
earthquakes and so encounter.*

*Will of Wit : A man is a man, if he have but a house
on his head.*

*As You Like It : iv, i. Ros : I had as lief be wooed of
a snail.*

Orl : Of a snail ?

*Ros : Ay, of a snail ; for though he comes slowly
he carries his house on his head.*

The discussion between Touchstone and Corin in Act iii, Scene ii, was evidently suggested by another book of Breton's,

The Court and the Country, which consists of a dialogue between a courtier and a countryman upon the respective merits of life at court and in the country. In the same book is a story which I think Shakespeare is referring to in Hamlet's famous line 'twas caviare to the general.' The Countryman is very scornful of Courtiers' food and says : ' Now for your dishes of meat, I will tell you, I heard my father once report it for a truth, that a great man who lived where you live, sent him for a great dainty a Porpoise Pie or two cold,' then the Master offered a piece of the pie to his wife, his children, his servants, his dog, and the miller and his dog, but each one in turn spat it out.

' This was one of your fine dishes. Another a great Lady sent him, which was a little Barrell of Caviary, which was no sooner opened and tasted, but quickly made up againe, was sent backe with this message, "Commend me to my good Lady, and thanke her honour, and tell her we have blacke Sope enough already but if it be any better thing, I beseech her Ladyship to bestow it upon a better friend, that can better tell how to use it."'

The number of similar lines are too numerous to give in full, so I have selected the most striking passages. Breton's prose has much the same quality as that of *As You Like It*, and must be read aloud to be fully appreciated as he was a master in blending vowel sounds, the beauty of which he learnt from the Italian language with which he was very familiar.

In *The Miseries of Mavillia* the heroine describes an old man who comes wooing her in words which are almost identical with Shakespeare's poem 'Crabbed Age and Youth,' from *The Passionate Pilgrim*.¹

¹ Compare also Deloney's *Garland of Goodwill*.

Mavillia says :

'To me comes my old doting lover, a rich chuff in the country, who having lately buried his old Joan, would fain play the young gentleman with me. But no, it would not be, contraries can never agree : age is foward and youth foolish : age is lame, and youth lustie : age is sickly, youth healthful : age is melancholie, and youth merry : age is modest, youth mad : age is towards death, and youth looks for life : age is jealous, that cannot youth away withal. How then, is it likely that we two should agree hardly, yet I can do little if I cannot speak him fair, give him good words, and let him go.'

Shakespeare transforms this prose into one of his most enchanting lyrics ; transposing the words, he endows them with a musical lilt and warmth of expression which is incomparably lovely.

CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH.

*Crabbed age and youth cannot live together ;
Youth is full of pleasance, age is full of care ;
Youth like summer morn, age like winter weather ;
Youth like summer brave, age like winter bare.
Youth is full of sport, age's breath is short ;
 Youth is nimble, age is lame ;
Youth is hot and bold, age is weak and cold ;
 Youth is wild, and age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee ; youth, I do adore thee ;
 O, my love, my love is young !
Age, I do defy thee : O, sweet shepherd, hie thee,
 For methinks thou stay'st too long.*

In 'A Post with a Packet of Mad Letters' there is 'A Letter of Advice to a Young Courtier,' which it is interesting to compare with Polonius's advice to Laertes in *Hamlet*,

Act i, Scene i, and the Countess's advice to Bertram in *All's Well That Ends Well*, Act i, Scene iii. Breton's letter runs thus :

' My Noble Cousin, I hear you are of late grown a great Courtier, I wish you much grace, and the continuing of your best comfort : but, for that your years have not had time to see much, and your kindness may hap to be abused let me entreat you a little now and then to look to that which I counsel you : keep your purse warily, and your credit charily, your reputation valiantly, and your honour carefully : for your friends as you find them use them : for your enemies fear them not, but look to them : for your love, let it be secret in the bestowing and discreet in the placing : for if fancy be wanton, wit will be a fool : scorn not ladies, for they are worthy to be loved : but make not love to many, lest thou be loved of none : If thou hast a favour, be not proud of thy fortune, but think it discretion to conceal a contentment : go neat, but not gay, lest it argue a lightness, and take heed of lavish expense, lest it beggar thy state : play little, and lose not much, use exercise, but make no toil of pleasure : read much, but dull not thy brain, and confer but with the wise, so shalt thou get understanding. Pride is a kind of coyness, which is a little too womanish : and common familiarity is too near the Clown for a Courtier. But carry thyself even, that thou fall on neither side ; so will the wise commend thee and the better sort affect thee : but let me not be tedious, lest it may perhaps offend thee : and therefore as I live, let it suffice I love thee, and so wishing thee as much good as thou canst desire to be wished, in prayer for the health and hope of thy happiness, to my utmost power I rest in affectionate good will. Thine ever assured H. L.'

This is the same excellent advice that Polonius gives Laertes.

Lylly's 'Euphues' contains an almost identical passage in prose, as there were no copyright laws the Elizabethans freely indulged in plagiarism which often led to violent

quarrels and the writing of abusive pamphlets. There is another remarkable simile in Breton's book *The Scholar and the Soldier*, a philosophical discourse between these two characters as to which is the finest profession. The Scholar's speech on 'honour' resembles Falstaff's speech before the battle of Shrewsbury in *Henry the Fourth*, Part I, Act v, Scene i.

' Honour, that is a thing greatly sought, little found, and much made account of, not for the Vertue of the substance it carrieth with it : but for the Majestie of the matter, which in substance is nothing, it purchaseth to the person Honourable reverence of his Inferiours, familiaritie with the Nobilitie, and favour of the Soveraigntie. Now there are divers honours, one Honour is gotten by Riches, which is a thing nothing durable : of nothing growes nothing, then Riches decaied, dies the Honour, then that Honour is nothing, in that it is a Riches nothing durable.'

' Another Honour is got by valiancie, and that is in Warre, whereby the Captaine winneth the Armes, that after during life, he to his honour, and after him his posteritie, to his and their honour, do honourably beare : yet for all this, well considered, it is nothing, for that is not certaine : for that in Warres to day is got, that to-morrow is lost : to day he gets an Ensigne, that to-morrow looseth his owne Armes, body and all : if hee come home well with his victorie, yet Virtutis comes invidia : Hee that did clime by Vertue may be overthowne by villainie : . . . then this honour, I see likewise is the nothing, that is nothing durable. But leaving this, there is now another Honour, got by Learning . . . By Learning comes Wisdome, by Learning ill used comes folly : by Learning comes Fame : by learning comes favour of the highest : by learning comes all goodnesse : by Learning comes that honour, that longest dooth endure : for after death, Fame of Learning is an honour to the person dead : and yet that Honour is nothing durable . . . If then Fame bee the chiefe Honour of the learned, which, well considered, is neither any thing in substaunce, nor

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yet durable : then this Honour (though many wayes some-
thing) yet in some it is nothing.'

Falstaff soliloquises—

' Well 'tis no matter ; honour pricks me on. Yea, but how if honour prick me off when I come on ? how then ? Can honour set to a leg ? No. Or an arm ? No. Or take away the grief of a wound ? No. Honour hath no skill in surgery, then ? No. What is honour ? A word. What is in that word, honour ? What is in that honour ? Air. A trim reckoning !—Who hath it ? He that died o' *Wednesday*. Doth he feel it ? No. Doth he hear it ? No. It is insensible, then ? Yea, to the dead. But will it not live with the living ? No. Why ? Detraction will not suffer it :—therefore, I'll none of it : honour is a mere scutcheon, and so ends my catechism.'

One cannot study Breton with Shakespeare without being impressed by the feeling of an intimate friendship which is consciously and unconsciously mirrored in their writings, in comparing the dates of their works it appears that they interchanged ideas, but one must always bear in mind that Breton was many years older than Shakespeare, and in some instances they both may have borrowed from an earlier source. Both writers have the same blythe sweet spirit, the purity of ideals, the strict moral tone, the wide knowledge of the country and love of rural delights, they echo in their poetry the sound of the birds and the beasts, the wind and the sea. It is this idyllic pastoral literature of the Elizabethans together with their joyous music which makes us talk glibly of 'Merry England,' and we are apt to lose sight of the fact that England was engaged in wars during most of Elizabeth's reign. Certainly the number of casualties was most remarkably small, and with no newspapers or wireless to bring the horrors of war and the inquisition into every home, the people on the whole

would not be touched by gruesome details as we are to-day ; and it was no doubt easier to be light-hearted when the large towns abounded in green meadows, and the houses, even in the heart of the City of London, had spacious gardens and orchards. When one remembers that only thirty years ago there were no motor-cars in Stratford-on-Avon one realises how almost impossible it is for us to visualise England as it was in Shakespeare's day.

' RECOLLECTED IN TRANQUILLITY.'

*I vainly searched for words that you might know
How yesterday, at sunset, day and night
Hushed suddenly to rapture at the sight
Each of the other's graces, for a slow
Rich moment ceased to breathe ; so urgent then
It seemed that you should understand how still,
How live, above the blue and brooding hill
One star-flame flickered, paled, and lived again.*

*But words, remembering beauty, are but miles
To measure moonlight, or a net to keep
The secret of the red sun's loveliness.
Therefore, I'll hold my peace ; for loves, dreams, smiles
(Oft turned to stone in telling) safest sleep
In wordless, undisturbed heart's quietness.*

MADELEINE WALKER.

'NOT A-ZACKLY.'

BY C. C. VYVYAN.

It is a very puzzling matter, this question of the 'not a-zackly' ones. In Cornwall there are quite a number of us who are 'not a-zackly.' There is something in the air of the peninsula that breeds and fosters people who are known among their friends as 'characters' and among their antagonists as 'freaks,' and these are found in every walk of life but most frequently among quite homely people in small villages and towns. Usually they are treated with kindness and tolerance and sometimes with something of the pride of civic ownership.

There is, for instance, William. He has no surname; to all the surrounding country he is just William of Trewhinnard who goes around with the Trewhinnard Brass Band. Undersized but radiant, of quite uncertain age, with cap tilted sideways, trousers sagging, mouth spread from one ear to the other as if in life he had found no purpose but the achievement and maintenance of a grin, he parades behind the band as a hanger-on at every fête and festival. What stage of musical development he has attained no one knows. He beats time with his hand to the drum while he shuffles along as if the music were a star to which he is bound to hitch his wagon, but it is clear from his appearance that the brazen melodies mean fullness of life and ecstasy to him.

Up and down the county there are many people, young and old, who look out on the world with the half-vacant

smile of William of Trewhinnard and it is the question of their place and meaning in what Omar calls 'this sorry scheme of things entire' that is such a very puzzling one.

Why, you ask, should the existence of such people constitute a problem? Why worry about the matter at all? Here are we, plain folk, sane folk, who know what's what and who's who, and there (poor things) are the nit-wits who cannot fend for themselves. But that is just it. Perhaps there is too much fending in the plain man's life, perhaps, if truth were known and stated, we should understand that the nit-wits or the half-wits after all have found the better way. A shadow of this truth is thrown by the often-quoted text about those mouths of the babes and sucklings, mouths out of which the praise of God was perfected; and also by the custom, in Ireland, of giving reverence and protection to idiots because they come from God, and by the veneration felt for them in Brittany where they bear the beautiful name of 'Les Innocents.'

Whatever we may think and feel about the feeble-minded, this fact is indisputable; the mystic path of contemplation, involving stillness of the busy mind that is normally kept rotating by the pressure of things seen, leads, as preliminary phase of the quest, to a state of intellectual vacuity achieved continuously and without an effort by those who are 'not a-zackly.' So then, the mockers will say at this point, you couple idiots and mystics? No. Not when ultimate issues are considered. But the fact remains that the simple-minded being does present, by his very limitations, a planed surface ready for illumination, a surface that brighter people can only attain by the strenuous effort of discarding habitual mental activities. Whether the illumination is ever given to such beings is quite another question, and probably an insoluble one, for the nit-wit has not any power of digesting

and recording his experience. Then, if you can never prove your case, the mockers will ask, why state it?

Simply because one may see now and then, in the eyes and smiles of those who are 'not a-zackly,' a reflection of that Truth which may never be ensnared by mortal disputation. Such a smile have I seen assuredly on the face of William Trehinnard, a smile that is password to regions fairer than any haunt of earthly birds and earthly flowers. Such a smile we saw in our childhood days each time that we encountered Short-Petticoat-Jane whose work was milking cows and 'maiting' pigs on Trebolsue farm.

I can see her now, a swill-bucket in each hand, wearing large stout boots and short stout skirt of home-spun, tightly-bodiced with a crotchet shawl about her skinny frame. Her eyes were dark as sloes and her mouth was but a slit in her weather-beaten face. That mouth was always smiling, yet you could hardly call it a smile, the expression of happiness on that brown and wrinkled face was transmuted, by the very nature of her calling and her personality and her features, into a grimace. To us, as children, there was something a little sinister about that smiling mouth and about the unbroken silence that she kept through all the years we knew her and about the strange dark look in her eyes and the purposeful walk with which she carried buckets through the mud. For Trebolsue was always muddy; it lay in a hollow, collecting and retaining the water from every surrounding eminence. Frogs bred in the wayside pool, the thatch of the roof turned green, each entrance to the pig-styes was only high enough for a gnome, one year's slime, in the yard, would be always mingled with the next, but Short-Petticoat-Jane never faltered in her work nor in her cheerfulness.

With neither home nor relatives, the workhouse having

been father and mother both to her, with a pittance for her wages, with not much of a past to boast about and very little future to hope for, she had her own inner kingdom of cheerfulness, unlit by any fuel of intelligence, not fed by any widening of interests. Whether, in her own individual dream-Paradise, she would still be maiting pigs, we cannot say ; we only know that within her dark eyes there was always lurking some secret happiness, a secret that we could not fathom and we might not share.

Of course there are many other Cornish half-wits who do not habitually wear a smile like William of Trewhinnard and Jane of Trebolsue, but nearly every one of them is exempt, in some inexplicable fashion, from the carking cares of our work-a-day world ; it is as if their minds were not attuned to register such cares, just as the mind of a child is not concerned with providing the wherewithal of life to-day or securing the income of to-morrow. This freedom it is, no doubt, that gives to some a smile of happiness and to others an air of innocence, while even those who are not happy will betray now and then, by a chance word or look or by some peculiar action, their independence of values that fetter us and our fellows, turning us into herded automatons, and will betray also their cognizance of a world where poets, children, madmen and disembodied spirits may forgather.

A long succession of these distinctive Cornish people comes back to memory.

There were three sisters living in a villa ; they were a little above the labouring class in station and a little below those neighbours with whom they would willingly have associated, so that they lived in rather a solitary manner. One was totally crippled, one was very rheumatic and the third was blind. All of them were a little strange, but the

third one was admitted to be 'not a-zackly,' and it was well known that if you pressed with your thumb a certain spot on her head she would go round and round like a teetotum. She lived her twilight life in a region of unnatural fears and thoughts among robbers and dark threats and shapes of evil round the corner and wandering gypsies and violence and cunning, and her talk was a curious jumble of all this, though now and then a gleam of beauty would be shot across the incoherence.

To listen to her was to wander in a world of restless apprehension akin to nightmare, but once she told me of a gypsy hymn and a gypsy pledge that she had overheard in last night's dream and as she chanted these words in a deep, rather croaking voice, rolling her sightless eyes about in uncanny fashion, I had a swift and fleeting apprehension how madness may be akin to poetry.

GYPSY PLEDGE OF LOYALTY TO EACH OTHER.

Here in the Eye of the great God who, unseen, seeth me, I pledge myself to be true to my brothers and sisters, wherever I wander, wherever I find them, at sunset and sunrise, in wood or in city, in street or in desert, by land or water, at morning and midnight.

GYPSY HYMN.

*Deep, deep, sing the song of Sleep
To the God who rests in the shade ;
Peace, peace, let labour cease
When the sun to rest is laid.*

*Far, far, keep Death's pale Star,
For his sleep is not of death ;
Death comes not nigh to the sleeping sky
But holds his grave-bound breath.*

*Hush, hush, cease the Winds their rush,
Be still, O Land and Sea.
Great God asleep in the woods so deep
And the Winds return to thee.*

*When the morning brake then the Voice doth speake
And the Sun again shall rise,
In the morning dew comes the saying true,
'He sleeps but never dies.'*

It is obvious that, as literature, these dream-pieces will not bear dissection ; the thoughts are only half-thoughts disconnected, the grammar is uncertain and the rhythm halts. Yet who can dare to dismiss them as nonsense, or indeed who can dare to classify as sense or nonsense, just as one classifies sheep and goats or separates black from white, any utterance of the human mind that is seeking for reality ?

Athwart our jumbled, half-articulate conceptions, beneath our halting, ill-adjusted language, the lowest among us may perceive and transmit his own glimpses of eternity.

*Great God asleep in the woods so deep,
And the Winds return to thee.*

But the neighbours only knew her as one who went round and round in circles at the pressure of a thumb.

Then there was the temporary cook, a finished and efficient chef who gave satisfaction to her various employers except once a month, when she would change completely with the waxing of the moon. A day or two before full moon she would turn queer and sometimes, which was worse, she would 'turn ugly' and threaten her mistress or her fellow-servants with the carving-knife. She wandered from one situation to another until there came a time when her habits were so well known in the county that she could not find another post. 'Mad' they would say. 'Dangerous'

they would say. 'Out of the question' they would say. And of course they were right. The carving knife was undoubtedly a risk to their everyday security. But no one gave her any understanding ; no one perceived that she was subject to some cosmic law far stronger than our little human standards of good and bad behaviour.

There was also the little old lady, four-foot nothing and very loquacious, who would come to see us once in every year or two with a long, long story. Always it would be a story about a grave and flowers that she needed urgently, sometimes it would be a sister's or a brother's grave, some very dear relation just departed, and sometimes it would be the grave of a little niece, but we knew that she had no relations and that this story of the newly-made grave was always prelude to a solitary journey that she would make on her own account to the County Mental Asylum. There she would sojourn for a while and then she would return to her little cottage and live in peace until the thought of another newly made grave came thrusting itself into the forefront of her consciousness.

Possibly among the 'not a-zackly' folk one should reckon that late-lamented Vicar who, every Christmas, presented to each bed-lier in his parish either a top-hat or a complete china dinner-service. It was his daughter's privilege to retrieve these misplaced benefactions and thus the Vicar was always able, year after year, to renew his largesse. There was also that other cleric who invariably slept by day and visited his parishioners by night ; and yet a third who discouraged all his flock from attending church and ensured his own solitude by keeping wolf-hounds and erecting barbed-wire entanglements all about the vicarage ; no tradesman nor caller might enter that garden or that house but a plate of tin was nailed upon the

gate and a stick was placed near by, and with this impromptu drum an urgent summons might be issued to the solitary parson within his lair.

But these, and such as these, although they seem to find a natural home and protective colouring in the Cornish villages, do in fact represent psychological puzzles of a rather complicated nature and they are not quite in line with those other folks who live out their simple lives in a state of irresponsibility.

There are also the half-wits of the open road. It may be that you never have exchanged a greeting with any one of them but, if you are accustomed to go to and fro about the county, you will find them in certain places, familiar, but not stationary, as milestones.

Up and down one solitary lane the Lady with the toque perambulates alone ; year in, year out ; day after day ; always between two and six o'clock in the afternoon. Her bearing is erect and her toes are carefully turned out, her shortish skirt hangs stiffly as a bell away from her person, her clothes are sound and tidy, always fawn in colour. A toque of late Victorian cut is neatly placed on her head ; she never carries basket or umbrella and her gloved hands hang always idly at her sides as she walks on with never a glance to right or left, with deliberate but unpurposeful steps like the steps of a sleep-walker.

Seen from behind she appears to be just a lady of extreme propriety taking a walk, but suddenly, just as you are overtaking her in your car, a strange thing will happen. The first time it occurs you will swerve violently towards the hedge and in future encounters you will nerve yourself, as for an expected jolt or collision ; but you never lose the sense of shock, for it is just as if on the surface of some placid pond the waters clef^t asunder in a moment, to rear

themselves up in two billows and then to sink again into glassy stillness ; or as if you were watching the face of some benevolent dignitary who suddenly, without warning or provocation, put his finger slyly to his nose. For the Lady with the toque, never pausing in her onward walk, will swiftly throw up both arms to heaven in a rigid gesture of despair or threat or mockery.

And that is all.

On a more frequented road in the outskirts of a town there stands a hoarding for advertisements and beside it there is always hovering a middle-aged woman, slightly bearded, with a very battered picture hat on her head, paste-pot in one hand, brushes in the other. Even when she is not sticking bills she keeps her station there, as if she were the guardian of a temple, and if you speak to her and look into her eyes you know that she is seeing things which you either cannot or may not see. It is generally believed that she sleeps in her hat with the paste-pot for a pillow and the brushes close beside her. Whatever her inmost thoughts may be, she has in this life found no expression for them, except in the alternating acts of sticking up or tearing down of bills.

Further, there is the idiot boy, or rather man, for he is long ago turned forty, who fishes on dry land. His home stands high on the north-east corner of the crossing of four roads and his garden is raised above the traffic by a six-foot bank. He stands, day after day and year after year, upon that garden bank, with a ten-foot bamboo pole clasped in both hands, with never a hook nor bait to expedite his efforts, fishing vainly, fishing hopefully in the stream of human traffic that trickles by. Sometimes he will emerge and parade up and down one of the roads, with the fishing-rod raised skyward, pressed against his body. He wears his cap awry and is always clad in ragged coat and long breeches

that flap unbuttoned about his calves, breeches that never yet have known the climax of a pair of gaiters.

All these tales are culled, in rather random fashion, from the memory of my one generation, but the queer people involved can trace a line of spiritual descent from characters well known in the byways of Cornish history, being allied more or less in their outlook on life to the wandering minstrels and preachers and itinerant idlers of olden days, to Wing Tom Fang and Big-headed Charlie and Henna Quick and little Dick Hampton and many another.

Perhaps it is part of our Celtic heritage that the population should have a smaller share than the usual one of folks completely sane and normal. Perhaps our angular small county, full of nooks and sequestered coves and isolated hamlets, does naturally attract, develop and foster people who are also full of unexpected nooks and angles. At any rate if we look about us and also behind us into the history and legends of the county, we shall see a long procession of people ranging from the border-land of the peculiar and the whimsical to the beyond-the-border-land of the 'not a-zackly'; people dependent largely on the kindness and the rationality of others for providing them with the necessities of life; people who have seldom any recognition that life is attended by any urgent necessities, because they will travel serenely from the cradle to the coffin, looking out all through that journey on our daily tragedies and comedies as on some flat-dimensioned picture-show, looking at our daily world with eyes but half—

No; they are not half-awakened eyes, for the simple-minded ones are surely looking out beyond the bars of rationality on other worlds, it may be fairer worlds, than the one in which we, with all our garnered wisdom, are imprisoned.

THE TWO ELIZABETHS

BY JAMES TURLE.

It has been said, and truly, that every village in England has had some share in the making of England, and in English history.

Much of this is known, the names of many villages are familiar to most of us, because of some event that took place long ago.

Not villages alone : open heaths, forests, rivers, marshes, have become famous in association with well-known characters, with battles, treaties, or episodes in our country's past—Senlac, the New Forest, the Medway, Sedgemoor, one could write so many.

Others again are so closely allied to legend that whenever the name of such a spot comes before us we immediately recall the old story of long ago—the Isle of Athelney, Glastonbury, the Isle of Ely, to name but three, are mingled with thoughts of King Alfred, St. Joseph of Arimathea and Hereward the Wake.

Of every such place we have been told, not only what the King or Queen, or famous one did, but why they did it, or indeed what they failed to do.

Runnymede, Lyme, Wedmore . . . you can read it all.

Consider all the places that Queen Elizabeth slept in : you can learn why she was in this or that place, why she was on that journey : for what purpose she went to Tilbury, to Deptford. Why she went to Rochester, and for what reason the house called Satis in that town received its name.

And yet, in spite of all this, I have found a small village where the people are proud to tell you what she did there, and yet cannot tell you why. Nobody knows. We know why she came to this village—because she was on her way to Rye and Winchelsea. We know, indeed, why she halted there—because it was time for her midday meal, and the day being warm, she saw beside the highway a pleasing stretch of green, well shaded by a mighty oak. There she rested and, later, was graciously pleased to step across the road to honour the family who lived in the old timbered house with her presence.

Yes, all this we know. The name of that family was Bishopps, and they went on living in that old house—you can see it to-day just as the Queen saw it—for more than two hundred years.

And now, in case you do not know this spot (which was much loved by Drayton) I will tell you what happened there.

This is no secret. You can read it in books, not perhaps in many books, but you can certainly read about it in one book, written by a descendant of the family of Frewen who flourished in the days of Elizabeth. Flourished exceedingly, and in due course the Frewens became owners of that famous estate and lovely old country house called Brickwall, in the village of which I write, and whose descendants live in the same parish to this day. And in this book you will read that after the great Queen had continued her journey along the road to Rye and Winchelsea, it was found that she had left, beneath the oak, a pair of shoes, the shoes she had been wearing. I am not certain, but I believe that these shoes are, or were until quite lately, still to be seen at the ancient house of the

Frewens at Brickwall. They were left on that green nearly four hundred years ago.

The old oak is still standing, aged and a little infirm, perhaps, but standing yet, close to the old church and the old Tudor house and just a little walk of a hundred yards or so past the village pump to the Six Bells Inn.

Beyond the village, and on the hill that overlooks the valley of the Rother—where at evening the sun shows up the tower of Wittersham Church, standing as guardian of the Isle of Oxney—is an ancient mill. No longer working, but looking towards the hills above Battle, and standing but a few yards from the old home of the millers who worked that mill for many generations. You can come down from that old house, and through the village, of which every house has at least one crooked chimney, pass by one cottage which must surely be the smallest in England, and so to the Oak, Queen Elizabeth's Oak.

Many times last summer I, too, passed that way, from the old mill house where I was staying. And every time I thought of the great Queen, and of the pair of shoes she left upon the short turf. And then, just as summer drew to its close, and the wild wet days of October's end made us think of winter's coming, I passed that way once more. The gales had gone, the sun was shining and the grass upon the green was bright and fresh as on any day in May. And there, side by side, carefully placed beneath the tree, were a pair of shoes, not of a Queen, perhaps, but a woman's shoes for all that. Small, and worn as if by much walking, but dainty of shape and with something of their earlier smartness. Very thin, and of little protection to the wearer, but shoes still.

And so I went upon my way, wondering who could have placed them there.

Over a stile, along a path beside a wood, across two pole-stripped hop gardens, through a little wood, another stile, a lane or two and so once again to the broad road, four or maybe five miles nearer the ancient town of Rye.

And here beside the road, upon a stretch of grass, I came upon a little company of wayfarers. Two men, I think there were, three women, some little girls, a boy or two, little children and babies. Two old travelling carts, horses, a pony and dogs. Gypsies? Yes, I think so, all, perhaps, except one girl who was standing alone, bathing the eyes of the pony with a wet rag and a tin of water, driving away the worrying flies.

And as I passed, I noticed that the boys and girls had no shoes and no stockings, and that the women wore men's boots . . . all except the girl with the pony, who had bare legs it is true, but very neat and very small shoes.

The day was hot, hot as summer, the men sat by the side of the road, smoking, the women were preparing some meal, and the children came running round for pennies.

I stopped and spoke to the girl with the pony. Yes, I think she was a gypsy, but neater than most, a pretty girl with rather small, delicately defined features, and very pleasing eyes. We talked of the pony, of the children, and . . .

'Don't they get their feet blistered,' I asked, 'running about without any shoes?'

'No,' she said. 'I didn't wear shoes until I was grown up. I'm nearly fifteen.'

'Well,' I went on, 'you've got a very nice pair now.'

She smiled, looked down at her shoes and then up again at me with those wonderful eyes.

'They're just a bit tight for me,' she said, 'but maybe they'll get a bit easier in a day or two.'

'Yes,' I agreed, 'new shoes always want a little breaking in.'

'They aren't quite new,' she smiled, 'only had them a day, a real lady give them to me yesterday, a real lady she was, and pretty too.'

One of the older women had joined us by now, the children were still clamouring for pennies, the pony was making his dinner from the grass by the roadside, free at last from the worry of flies.

'A trifle for the gypsy's baby,' she began; 'it's a long road we're going, gentleman. A piece of silver for your fortune, and you with a lucky face, kind gentleman!'

'Listen,' I said, 'just for once I want to tell you a story instead, I will tell you what you've done. You have come along this road a long way, you came over the bridge by the river, past the old oak and the Six Bells, haven't you? Yes, I know you have; well, did you ever hear the story of the great Queen, and how she left something under that old oak tree, hundreds of years ago?'

'No, we never,' said the girl, 'did we, Auntie?'

'Well,' I said, 'I will tell you,' and I told them of Queen Elizabeth, of how she had stopped there. 'And what do you think she left?' I asked. 'No, you will never guess, but she left the same as you did, yesterday, or was it this morning early?'

'What, old shoes?' she asked.

'Yes,' I agreed, 'a pair of shoes, that is what the Queen left, under the oak, but nobody knows why. Why did you leave yours?'

She smiled, and caught one of the smallest toddlers, who was clamouring louder than ever.

'I thought,' she said slowly, 'as someone might come along as wanted a pair, some poor girl as maybe hadn't got no shoes at all. I'd seen one yesterday as hadn't got no shoes.'

'There,' said I, 'now I know why the Queen left hers, and here's a little piece of silver for the gypsy's baby, and good-bye!'

Pennies for the children, and so back along the road again.

Someone running.

'What was her name, the Queen's name?' she asked.

'Elizabeth,' I answered, 'and yours?'

'Why, the same as hers'—her dark eyes shining more than ever—'Elizabeth. Fancy two Elizabeths! But mostly I'm called Bess, reckon she were never called that, was she? Not Bess—not Queen Bess?'

'Yes she was,' I said, 'Good Queen Bess.'

'Fancy that now,' she smiled, delightedly. 'I'm glad I left the shoes.'

The last little gleam of autumn sunshine was saying good night to the old oak, as I passed that way once more. Great clouds seemed to be rising up from westward beneath the setting sun, the village was deserted; the old oak stood just as I had always seen it, but the rays of the sun seemed to give it a little smile of friendliness. Otherwise everything was as it had looked that morning, except for one thing . . . the shoes had disappeared.

I looked across to the old Tudor house, I thought of the great Queen, and of the gypsy girl . . . 'The two Elizabeths,' I said.

'BLOOD SPORTS AND HYPOCRISY':
A REPLY.

To the Editor of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

SIR,

I have read with the very greatest pleasure so many of Major Jarvis' contributions on sporting subjects both to the CORNHILL MAGAZINE and also to BLACKWOOD'S that it came as something of a surprise to me to find myself not altogether in agreement with his article on 'Blood Sports and Hypocrisy' in your March issue.

I have enjoyed hunting since the war and I do not think that the attitude of the post-war generation is that 'what is more the fox, stag or hare enjoys it as much as anyone.' All of us who think about the matter at all realise that hunting must entail suffering for the quarry, but we feel that it would suffer also were it to be shot, trapped or poisoned as happens to rats and rabbits and other wild vermin.

The charge against hunting people, then, is surely not so much that they cause extra cruelty by their sport, as that by making a sport at all of the destruction of certain wild animals, which could more efficiently but not less cruelly be destroyed by trap, by poison or by gun, they are brutalising themselves. Very few of those in the hunting field, however, derive their pleasure from seeing the hounds kill their fox. They wish to be 'in at the death,' because that is proof that they have ridden well themselves; and the sport to the majority is to be able by their own skill and endurance to follow where the fox and hounds lead.

In the case of covert shooting too, no reasonable person can deny that suffering is caused to the wounded birds; but in this case

also the sportsman derives his pleasure from his own quickness of eye and skill in handling his gun rather than from witnessing the death of his game. A clumsy shot, who wounds an undue proportion of his birds is not likely to get many invitations to big covert shoots.

I have never taken part in nor ever witnessed a coursing meeting so I will not attempt to discuss the element of cruelty in coursing.

I have never taken part in nor even witnessed a cock fight, either, so I will try to base my remarks entirely on what Major Jarvis himself tells us in his own article.

He tells us that 'Nature for some reason known only to herself has designed the game-cock for one purpose and one purpose only, fighting,' but surely the fact is that it is man who in the course of centuries has by selective breeding brought the game-cock to this pitch. I think Major Jarvis really recognises this, when he says that 'the great majority of the cock-fighting fraternity are far more interested in the breeding, crossing of recognised strains, and training than in the actual main.'

Major Jarvis asks us to compare the brutality of a cock-fight with that of a professional boxing match, but, after all, the old-fashioned prize-fight was—I think I am right in saying—just as illegal as cock-fighting is to-day. The present fights are of limited duration and very carefully supervised, the contestants have to wear regulation gloves and if the fight is too uneven it is stopped by the referee.

Again the boxers are not gladiators kept for the sole purpose of fighting in public. They choose their own career for their own pecuniary advantage, and when they retire may hope for a long and useful life as licensees of public-houses, or attendants at billiard saloons or other places of entertainment where chuckers-out may be needed.

I wonder whether the two forms of cruelty 'terror caused' and 'agony inflicted' are always dissociated.

The hunted fox may suffer from terror just as the rabbit hunted by a stoat undoubtedly suffers from terror ; but at least if he is caught by the hounds he is quickly killed and if he escapes them he escapes without suffering any physical agony.

The driven pheasant, if wounded, may suffer physical agony, but I doubt if he is afflicted with much anticipatory terror.

An animal or bird, however, if placed in a confined space with an adversary, who proves stronger than himself, will surely first have agony inflicted on him and then terror caused to him as he struggles, however gamely, against what he must realise is inevitable defeat and death.

The owner of a cock may not put him in the ring against his will, because he will not wish to risk his stake on a bird that has not his heart in the business ; but once the bird has been placed in the ring I take it that he cannot be withdrawn, however much he may be suffering, without his owner losing his stake ; and this particular inducement to an owner to show mercy to his bird ends therefore as soon as the cock-fight starts.

Major Jarvis tells us that 'the game-cock if properly bred will never admit defeat, however battered he may be, and he will continue fighting until both birds are so knocked about that both will probably die.' I believe that stags and other male animals at certain seasons will almost certainly fight to the death if placed in a confined space together and no doubt if their horns were tipped with sharp steel spikes they would be able to kill each other more quickly, but is this instinct, which perhaps we all share a little, a fair reason for saying that 'the loser will die the death he has chosen' and 'would be quite content to die as he has lived,' and are not such statements rather on a par with that pilloried by Major Jarvis at the beginning of his article 'what is more the fox, stag or hare enjoys it as much as anyone.'

Surely the difference between the foxhunter as distinguished from the breeder of horses and hounds and the cock-fighter as dis-

tinguished from the breeder of cocks is that the foxhunter derives his main pleasure from his own ability to ride across country in the wake of fox and hounds taking at least a small risk to life and limb himself while doing so and only incidentally inflicts terror on the hunted fox, while the cock-fighter must derive all his pleasure from seeing the cocks display their gameness in battering each other to death and perhaps incidentally from winning or losing money on the result.

It may be that one day the law will compel those of us who wish to ride across country to follow a drag line only and those of us who wish to exercise our skill in shooting to shoot clay pigeons only and perhaps the law will be right to do so; but meanwhile it does not seem to me to be fair to say that a man is a hypocrite because he enjoys his day with the foxhounds in spite of the terror which the foxes may suffer by being hunted; but at the same time will not countenance a cock-fight because he feels that there is no sport in it at all besides the cruelty inflicted on the cocks by the battering they give each other; and the chance of the betting, the latter an element, by the way, which does not enter either into hunting or covert shooting.

I am, Sir, Yours, etc.,

J. W. St. John Whitehead.

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CARNIVAL.

BY BEATRICE WASHBURN.

THE candy-fluff man stood on the corner of Royal and Canal Streets whirling sugar on a stick. The sugar was rose coloured and as lovely to look at as spun glass, but the candy-fluff man did not look at it much. He did not have to, for he could whirl sugar in his sleep. He could spin tops, too, and manipulate little dancing men and balance dancing mice and peddle penny whistles, all the infinitesimal and trivial amusements that catch the passing fancy of the crowd. The fluff man was used to crowds. He had worked for them all his life.

' You know,' he said suddenly to the policeman who was standing in front of him to guide the tumultuous vagaries of the Mardi Gras throng, ' I used to wonder what a town looked like when there wasn't any crowd. I ain't never seen one.'

' Yeah,' said the policeman vigorously, directing a flock of mermaids and priests, of Mickey Mouses and clowns and monks, ' I used to wonder that too. But, anyway, they're all having a good time. That's something. You don't have to watch people beating each other up and knifing each other like I do.'

' No,' said the candy-fluff man, giving his sugar an extra swing so that it resembled a huge coral-coloured ball. ' Maybe you're right, Officer'—and yet, he reflected, looking out over the vast assemblage of court ladies and witches and sailor boys and skeletons and devils and peasant girls, that was what got you sometime. It was all so nutty.

Canal Street roped off as though for a country fair and everyone laughing and shouting as though they were on perpetual holiday. The streets were never normal for a holiday.

One gang was dressed like mermaids in green seaweed and glass beads, a flock of Indians were dancing a war dance in front of his candy machine, a boy dressed in bottle caps was playing 'Whispers in the Dark' on his harmonica, two nuns and a stuffed leopard handed out nickels for some candy fluff. It was a carnival crowd and he was sick of it.

He pulled back his thoughts as though they had been on wires and began swirling the sugar fantasy with both hands, back and forth, like a pattern. They liked that. They were so nutty they liked anything that was different. Dumb. Was there anything so dumb as a carnival crowd, out for a good time, never a thought in the world? What did they have to mask for, anyway? Weren't ordinary clothes good enough for them? Did they have to spend their whole lives dressed up like monks or devils or knights or fairy princesses as he had done? Let them have a thirty-year stretch of show business, with everybody pretending to be somebody else and nothing to it but fake, and they would be mighty glad to cut out all that masking and appear like regular people. Real people, thought the candy man, as he handed a glistening ball to a little boy dressed like a pirate. 'Here you are, sonny, here's a whopper all pink coloured like a rose.'

Real people. Somewhere in the world there must be real people. Not just a lot of monkeys dressed up on sticks. Real people going to work and supporting their families and eating dinner at night with their own wives and kids. Real people who did something beside shout and sing and dance in the streets.

'I'm doing fine to-day,' he told the policeman. 'So many children. And the kids always go strong for spun sugar. But then,' he added scornfully, 'crowds is all alike.'

He had learned that secret of his profession. No matter how much people might differ as individuals they were all alike in the mass. He was as much at home in Coney Island as on the pier at Atlantic City, in Venice, California, as at the Texas Centennial, at the state fair in Minnesota as the Carnival season in New Orleans. Crowds were crowds; he wandered up and down the continent following the street fairs and the circuses and the expositions.

'If someone was to give me a wish, now,' he said to the policeman, as the floats toppled by looking like great masses of ice cream and men on stilts with gigantic faces began throwing confetti, 'do you know what I'd do with it?'

But the policeman wasn't listening. That was the worst of a crowd. No one ever listened to you. But he went right on with his thoughts the way he was accustomed to do because you can't bother with what people think of you in this world, particularly when you know they don't think much. He had long ago given up thinking about it. But, well, if someone was to come down the street now and say, 'Joe, you can have one wish in all the world. What'll it be, boy?'

No one would have to ask him that twice. Because his one wish was to find Pauline again, Pauline with the cloudy dark hair and big eyes set wide apart in her face like a baby's. Pauline, his wife, the girl he had married when they were doing a four a day in Atlantic City and she was the model he threw swords at. It was a good thing when they gave up that act because Joe had about lost his nerve for fear he would actually hit her.

'Yep, that's what I'd wish,' he said aloud, handing a

candy fluff to a fat lady dressed like a gypsy. 'I'd say, if I could only see Pauline again I wouldn't care.'

Just once to see the way she puckered up her mouth when she laughed, and the dimple in her cheeks and the cute way she had of rumpling up his hair when she'd talk to him. That was why he had traversed the continent so many times, back and forth, Bangor to San Diego, Seattle to Palm Beach, little towns in Illinois and Kansas, tank towns where he could trail along after the circus because Pauline had always said that when she gave up vaudeville she was going to get a house in a tank town with a front gate and honeysuckle over the door and make her own apple pies. Pauline was some cook, even in theatrical boarding houses she could do a mean-act with a frying pan so that the Yodelling Boys and the Fat Woman down the hall used to come in for a free handout of her spaghetti and she would laugh and say, 'Go to it, there's plenty more where that came from.'

Pauline didn't look like she ever ate anything herself. She looked like she lived on moonbeams and rose petals, she was that pretty. Everybody said he was lucky to have such a beautiful girl as a partner and then, when they were married, the whole profession envied him.

'You won't keep her long, Joe,' they used to say after the show when they were waiting backstage or had gone across to the corner saloon. 'She's too pretty for the road. Wait till Hollywood sees her.'

Of course they had been right. They had been right from the first. He even knew where the Hollywood scout picked her up. It was while she was doing that mirror turn in the magician act in Salt Lake City. When he had returned to their room that night after the show there was an envelope lying on the bed.

'Dear Joe : I've gone to Hollywood. Don't wait for me because I won't be coming.'

Just that. I've gone to Hollywood. He used to wonder about it night after night when he couldn't sleep and day after day when he couldn't work because no one would give him a job with Pauline gone. It spoiled his act, they said. Spoiled his act !

If that was all she had done to him. She might as well have stuck a knife into his heart, it would have been quicker, that was all. It wouldn't have hurt any more and beside when your wife walks out on you it does something to you. You lose your nerve. It wasn't only that he couldn't live without her, but it changed something in him, too. You weren't yourself. You were just a bum. Just a pitiful cheap skate that couldn't hold a woman's love.

If I had been the right kind she never would have left me, he often used to think. What made her leave me ? She used to say she loved me. She said it so I almost began to believe it myself. Oh, well, of course, I'm not much. Ugly kind of mug and a skinny little runt at that. No sex appeal. Never knew what to say to a woman. I'm no Clark Gable and I didn't give her much of a show, either. Couldn't even take care of her decent. One night stands. Four acts a day, dressed in tights, making her do animal acts with tights when she was a queen, she was. A dream girl that even the talent scouts could spot. Four shows a day when she was so young and lovely. So young and lovely . . .

All of a sudden he saw an empty space in front of his candy stand and realised what had happened. Mustn't let your thoughts wander in the show business. That's what happened that first time when he was thinking of Pauline and doing the double somersault on the trapeze and missed

a split second. He had landed in the hospital. Wonder it wasn't the cemetery, but it was only a smashed collar-bone. But after that he wasn't no good at wire work any more. That broken shoulder would be with him all his life.

'Sugar cotton, candy fluff,' he intoned, while his eyes wandered over the huge, milling throng of maskers. 'Buy your candy fluff. Only a nickel, boys and girls—only five pennies. Fresh while you wait.'

Mustn't let yourself get to thinking while you are at work. The crowd can tell every time and they drop off. Carnival crowds don't want nothing to worry them. It seems like they can smell trouble and just keep away from it. The bright sunshine trickled through his thin clothes and made him feel good inside. If only folks would go for this candy stuff he could buy himself a square meal at Mack's place and top it off with a steak. A square meal was something he didn't get enough of. It looked like things got higher every year and travelling was awful steep when you went in the bus or hitch-hiked along the road, hoping some fellow in a car would give you a lift.

'If only I had had money,' he thought wearily, shifting from one tired foot to another, 'maybe I could have held her.'

He edged his way slowly up St. Charles's Street, the centre of the crowd. They were throwing confetti and clashing cymbals, tooting penny horns and singing to the music of the passing bands. Anything to make a noise. Some of them were dancing, wherever there was room, and some were 'trucking' and 'shagging,' or joining hands and rushing through the crowd.

How could they be happy, that is what the fluff man wondered. How can anyone be happy in this cock-eyed world? Or does it help to put on a mask and pretend

you're someone else? Maybe it does at that. Maybe we take ourselves too seriously. Maybe that's how we look to God, just a bunch of nuts dressed up like monkeys and clowns and princesses. Just a crowd of maskers, no one seeing anyone else the way they really are. 'I have enough of people to last the rest of my days,' he thought suddenly, and then he tried to remember places where he had been where there weren't any people. But there were so few of them. It seemed as though he had been born in a crowd and had stayed there all his life.

What a laugh He must get out of it when the party's over and we take off our costumes and show up our real selves.

Even when he was a little boy he had been part of his father's vaudeville team and he used to sleep in a trunk backstage. He hadn't never had any vacation like other kids. His family was always on tour. Why, when he was four years old he did a brother and sister act that knocked them cold in Pittsburg and had them laying in the aisles in Kansas City.

'I was some slicker when I was a kid,' he often used to tell his associates around the bar where they repaired for refreshment after work. 'But the pictures have knocked the stage one in the eye. No future for vaudeville any more.'

His companions agreed with him, though some of the more illustrious ones had gone on to Hollywood and the films. But the fluff man was not illustrious. He was not even able to maintain his standing in his own profession after Pauline had left him so that it was not long before he had taken to selling things in carnival crowds because it was the only thing he knew how to do. His trained seal had grown too old to work and the bicycle act was out on account of vaudeville being taken over by the films and people didn't want to look at acrobats any more.

So he wandered up and down the continent, following the street fairs and the circuses and the expositions. Sometimes he was moved to wonder what a city looked like when it wasn't crowded. But he never knew because he was never there.

'Well, well'—something heavy struck his shoulder—'if it ain't old Joe. Bust my eye if it ain't my old pal of the seal act. Come along and get a drink.'

The face that looked at him was lined and seamed, not with age, for the old pal was still fairly young, but with worry and dissipation. It was the face of a typical showman and it held all the cynical weariness of one who made his living by amusing other people.

'O. K.,' said Joe readily, laying down his huge stick of colour confection and closing up his sugar oven. 'Be glad to.' And he was glad of the opportunity to talk to someone, even if it was old Hoffman who used to be a barker in an animal show. They fought their way through the encircling crowd of Dutch girls and pirates, of monks and Renaissance nobles and fairies and artificial cowboys, to the nearest bar where two Donald Ducks and a stuffed elephant were already standing.

'Where you been?' asked Hoffman, tapping on the counter with a nickel. 'Make it two Scotch.'

'Oh, everywhere,' answered the candy-fluff man vaguely, in answer to the question. 'I got down into Mexico last month. Tia Juana.'

'That so?' said his companion indifferently. 'Them border towns is sure lousy.'

'You've said it,' said the fluff man, draining the small glass of whisky at a gulp. Then came the question he had been dreading.

'Where's Pauline?' Hoffman was calling for another

drink. It seemed as though the monks and pirates and nurses and fairies all stopped a minute to listen for the answer. But, of course, he realised, this could not be true. No one gave a damn about him. No one even knew who he was. Just a candy man. Comes with the carnival. Gone by Ash-Wednesday. Up and down the continent. He follows the crowds.

'We split up,' he said, trying to make it sound casual. 'She's gone out to Hollywood.'

'That so?' Hoffman pushed the other glass towards him. 'Well, let's drink to her, anyway. I thought I saw her picture in the paper yesterday. That is her staying at the hotel, ain't it?'

'Staying at the hotel?' said the candy man stiffly so his mouth wouldn't tremble. 'Keep a stiff upper lip, my boy.' How often his father used to say that to him. 'Pauline staying at the hotel here? You seen her?'

'Well, if it ain't her it's her twin sister,' said Hoffman, beckoning to the bartender. 'Miss Pauline Ardwell staying at the St. Charles's Hotel. Miss Ardwell going to have a part in "*Gone with the Wind*" or whatever's that new show. Wait a minute. I'll prove it to you. Here, sonny.'

He whistled to a newsboy and gave him a nickel for the fresh edition of the evening paper, splashed with purple and green ink for carnival, full of pictures of floats and maskers and kings and queens. On the second page was one of Pauline. There was no mistaking it. Her eyes looked straight at him and her mouth was puckered into the little smile he knew so well.

He put down his drink suddenly, without tasting it. 'See you later,' he said to Hoffman and stepped out into the throng of dancers. It was like stepping into a running river of sound and colour and sharp waves. The crowds

jostled him, they nudged him, they battered him, for he was a little man. But he did not care. He only wanted to look at the St. Charles's Hotel where Pauline was staying. He only wanted to see her once. Just look at her, feast his thirsty eyes upon her face. He wouldn't bother her none. She wouldn't even know that he was there.

Nor did she. For by some miracle of fate she was standing on the balcony that overlooked the street, just as she used to be, just as though she were still living on rose petals and clouds. She was laughing and talking to the guy beside her and he was a rich guy, you could see that by his clothes. But Pauline had not changed at all, just as lovely, just as slim, her eyes set wide apart like a baby's, just like they used to be. She had on a black velvet dress, that fitted her like she had been poured into it, and a diamond ornament at her throat to hold it together, and a little hat that went up into a peak with a veil on it. She had diamond bracelets on her wrists, too, the kind they used to look at in the ten cent store. Only this kind was real.

He looked and looked at her, but he knew that though she seemed to be gazing straight down at him, that she did not recognise him. How should she when he had on that dirty old coat and torn pants and hadn't had a haircut in a month? She wouldn't expect to see her husband just a tramp down there in the crowd. Just a tramp with only ten bucks between him and starvation. 'What if I was to ask her for fifty dollars so I could get a decent suit and a meal and get on my feet again? Maybe if I was to look like that guy that's with her . . . Oh, God, what's the use. I'm an outsider, that's what. A down and outer. Not in her class. I never was. Just lucky to have her for a few months, like a man might steal a diamond and take it out to look at it.'

Up the street passed a truck-load of maskers, all dressed in orange dominoes with huge white ruffs, all singing, some dancing on the floor of the huge truck on which they rode. They were throwing confetti, screaming with high spirits, driving headlong through the crowd. The milling mob made way for them, dropped back to make a lane for the gigantic vehicle. All but the candy man, who did not stir.

From the hotel balcony arose a shriek, that was equalled only by the pandemonium in the crowd below, who suddenly ceased to dance and sing and began to press backward, in excited circles. The great wheels of the truck were at last motionless, unable to pass a soiled white bundle in their path.

'Don't look down, honey,' begged the well-dressed man on the balcony of the woman in soft velvet and the peaked hat. 'It's an accident. Don't look down. Come on inside and get a drink.'

'Who was it?' asked Pauline, she of the wide child-like eyes and the pretty puckered smile, as they made their way into their luxurious suite.

'Just a candy man,' said the well-dressed man soothingly. 'Poor fellow. He never knew what struck him. The truck went so fast.'

But in this he was wrong. For the candy man knew exactly what had struck him. Lying on the ground, surrounded by the horrified maskers, he even heard, away in the distance, the shrill screaming of the ambulance that was to arrive too late. His last conscious thought was that he had asked so little out of life and that in return he had received practically nothing at all. And the last sounds that reached him were those of man's incredible merriment and gaiety, just as he had been accustomed to hear it all his life.

New Orleans.

BY THE WAY.

'If only Hitler will allow us,' said a wife to her husband the other day, 'we shall have a very happy summer.' That neither of the two were in any sense or degree associated with the surgings of national aggrandisement but were just such simple folk as can be found in their millions throughout this troubled world was proved by her next sentence: 'We'll go out to Kew and do a lot of jolly things like that.' It is surely one of the most imponderable of twentieth-century mysteries that the shadow of international hatred and disaster can be laid by the will of a single man darkly across the paths of remote, individual, and humble felicity: it is this power inherently latent in all dictatorship which must inevitably wither on this earth if freedom is to survive. That at any rate is the major certainty of our civilization.

★ ★ ★

And here let us pause briefly to wonder at, even if we cannot quite admire, the mentality that, whilst engaged in decrying its own veracity, expresses in the very same utterance an expectation of being still believed.

★ ★ ★

It seems as though the well-known British habit of understatement is hardly even yet understood by our Continental friends: talking recently to some visitors from Central Europe, I found them quite ingenuously convinced of the immunity in the event of war of the Italian Navy. It is to be as much presumed as hoped that Signor Mussolini

is far too well informed to share so pleasant—and for him so disastrous—an illusion.

★ ★ ★

'We live,' wrote a certain gentleman named William Wordsworth, 'by admiration, hope, and love.' Doubts occasionally cross the mind in these stirring days whether that saying is entirely true: by hope certainly, but there is a query about the admiration as about the love. For my own part I could do with a little less news from abroad.

★ ★ ★

A number of men were discussing the Prime Minister's admirable speech at the recent Anniversary Dinner of the Royal Literary Fund, particularly that delightful passage in which he declared that the one bone he wanted to pick with dictators was that they left him no time for reading; as soon as ever he took up a novel a secretary rushed in crying 'Sir, he's done it again!' One of the company was a distinguished historian: he was appealed to to say if in his studies he had ever come across the case of a dictator who was also the possessor of a sense of humour: after thought, and with some diffidence, he could produce only the dying words of Vespasian—it was at once pointed out that if a dictator had to wait to be humorous till he was dying he could not be allowed to count. It was accordingly agreed, *nem. con.*, that dictatorship and humour were incompatible.

★ ★ ★

Travel books are of many kinds and, in this age when no part of the world is far from any other, are many in number: one that is good to read must first of all be written interestingly and secondly gains in accordance with the intrinsic interest of the places visited; in the few cases where both requirements are met the result is always a

delight—but those cases are few, for though many travel and nearly all who travel write, the combination of the good traveller and the good writer is rare. To-day it is more often than not found in a woman and a young one: there are several notable examples and now Audrey Harris must be added to the list. She has undeniably and admirably fulfilled both requirements in *Eastern Visas* (Colling, 12s. 6d. n.) in which she journeys alone through Russia, Korea, China, Japan, India, Tibet, Afghanistan and elsewhere: she states at the outset that 'her intention is to put herself back into each stage of the journey as she lived it at the time'—which shows at once that she has the intention which can best preserve freshness; it is less easy to agree with her 'I am an ordinary person': for hers was no ordinary journey and the result is no ordinary book. As Miss Harris is both young and 'nomadic by temperament' we may look forward with pleasure to many another from her pen.

★ ★ ★

Poetry doubtless needs defence in these days which are so inimical to all but destruction, and it was therefore fitting that a book should be published entitled *The Poet's Defence* (Cambridge University Press, 7s. 6d. n.), and yet the author, Dr. J. Bronowski, though he has much to say which is refreshingly provocative, has to some extent unduly loaded the dice against himself. His purpose is, so it is declared, to take 'established poets,' but he begins with Philip Sidney whose fame, so he himself states, 'is not the fame of a poet' and he ends with A. E. Housman and W. B. Yeats, whose works are too recent to enable us to say they are 'established': moreover, Dr. Bronowski dismisses them both and also Swinburne as follows: Swinburne is 'a disorderly and a wasted poet and Housman was so thin and silly that he

can hardly be called a poet' whilst 'Yeats is a poet great enough to stand against poetry'—which is the concluding dictum of a puzzling book. But it will interest and amuse even if it does not persuade.

★ ★ ★

It is one of the truly suggestive things about life that in many cases people are at least as interesting for those experiences which meant most to them as for those for which they are remembered. Until now no one has troubled to write a life of *Captain Marryat* (Longmans, 15s. n.) ; no one before Christopher Lloyd has thought it worth while to record his exploits as a naval officer, a man of quick temper and quarrels, restless and rash, but always very much alive, who was 38 years of age when he retired and turned to the writing by which alone his name is now known. It is a biography deserving of rescue from oblivion, and in it Mr. Lloyd well justifies his aim 'to explore, through the career of the man who was chiefly responsible for building up the priceless legend of the old Navy, the fascinating period which lies between 1806 and 1830.' And vividly he establishes that writers of children's books are by no means necessarily made of milk and water !

★ ★ ★

Owing solely to the accident of dates, my *Last of the English* being published on May 2 and Mr. James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* on May 4, I have had the interesting and novel experience of finding my name coupled briefly with his in a literary paragraph. I make the prediction (entirely altruistically) that his work will achieve a wider publicity than mine—the question of endurance not being raised—for it is at present a mad universe where extremes are popular and he will no doubt have his reward. Some years ago I spent a good many hours trying conscientiously to find either

coherence, purpose, or sense in *Ulysses*, but finally was compelled to reject the book as the nastiest trash offered in recent times to a gullible world. I do not therefore propose to waste either time or money upon *Finnegans Wake*: its language has been called 'trenchant' and its purpose 'sincere'—this in a preliminary note and published in an eminent paper which quoted the first and last paragraphs of this much-advertised work, it is only necessary to add that neither obey any known rules of either sanity or grammar. It is a hard saying but obviously a true one that every age gets the literature it deserves.

* * *

Much has been written about Byron and his loves and yet, strange enough, it seems that there is always something more to be written: nor has R. Glyn Grylls, who wrote so good a biography of Mary Shelley, exhausted the interest of one of the most singular of menages: in her new biography she traces these events anew from the angle of *Claire Clairmont* (Murray, 10s. 6d. n.), a beautifully produced, vivacious and authoritative account of Allegra's mother, one who loved not wisely but too well and, though living to the age of ninety-one, had long since thanked God she could never be young again.

* * *

Of another great man, of a very different type to either poet, much has also been written, but it is good that Muriel Wellesley should complete her previous study of her great-grand-uncle by presenting now *Wellington in Civil Life* (Constable, 18s. n.): she is truly able to justify the rest of her title 'through the eyes of those who knew him,' and she is eminently successful in portraying him as a much more human, much more lovable figure than the Iron Duke has often been thought to have been. This volume which,

continuing the last, takes him from 1818 to his honoured death is full of good things, some of which have a bearing upon to-day, as for example the Duke's words in a debate in 1838 : ' My Lords, I entreat you and I entreat the Government not to forget that a great country like this can have no such thing as a little war. They must understand that, if they enter on these operations, they must do it on such a scale, and in such a manner, and with such determination . . . as to make it quite certain that those operations will succeed.'

★ ★ ★

If one may judge from what her publishers picturesquely call her 'march of crime,' that is to say, the succession of her four previous detective stories, it is highly improbable that Miss Josephine Bell is ever likely to write a bad one, but obviously it is difficult, if not impossible, for any writer always to write one equal to his, or her, best. *Death at Half-Term* (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.) is therefore good, but one would be doing Miss Bell's undoubtedly high powers less than justice if one were to describe it as quite up to the standard, let us say, of either of her last two. Dramatic as it finally comes to be, excellent as is the ingenuity, and eminently effective as is the running contrast between the grimness of murder and the interested chatter of the schoolboys who appoint themselves, as far as they may, as sleuths, still there are too many characters about whose fates the reader is indifferent for the story to be really exciting. And light-heartedly as murder often is committed, in fiction, nevertheless, I for one found it rather hard to credit its commission as herein revealed. Yet all the same a clever, well-told, well-constructed murder, over which an hour or two may be agreeably spent.

G.

THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 188.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iv, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.I, and must reach him by 30th June.

Than if with thee the roaring wells
Should gulf him fathom-deep in brine ;
And hands so often clasp'd in mine,
Should toss with —— and with ——.

1. Sylvan historian, who canst —— express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme :
2. To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling
Thro' many a wov'n —— divine !
3. —— swike thu never nu.
4. There's not a budding boy or —— this day
But is got up and gone to bring in May.
5. Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
—'d by the coil of his crystalline streams,
6. Hark, 'tis the sparrow's good-night twitter
About your cottage —— !

Answer to Acrostic 186, April number : 'Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn' (Thomas Hood : 'Autumn'). 1. *LietH* (Bret Harte : 'What the bullet sang'). 2. *OnE* (William Cory : 'Mimnermus in Church'). 3. *World* (Browning : 'Parting at Morning'). 4. *LettinG* (Sir Samuel Ferguson's 'Cean Dubh Deelish'). 5. *YE* (Peacock : 'Three Men of Gotham').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss E. Dawdeswell, St. Anne's, Verwood, Wimborne, Dorset, and Miss Rosa G. Perry, Beechen Green, Aughton, Ormskirk, who are invited to choose books as mentioned above. N.B.—Sources need not be given.

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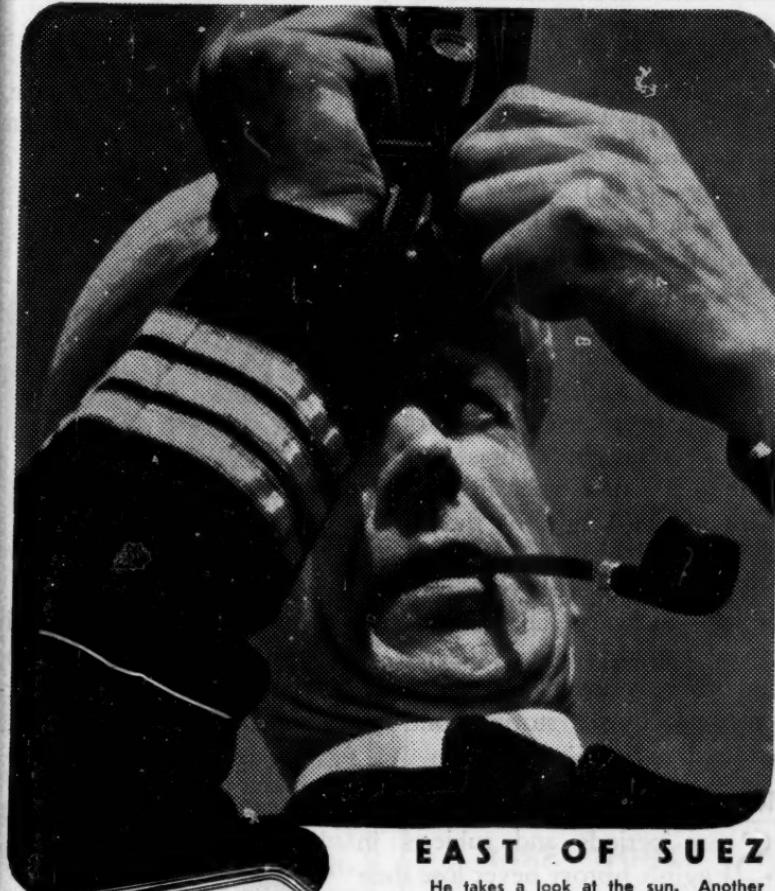
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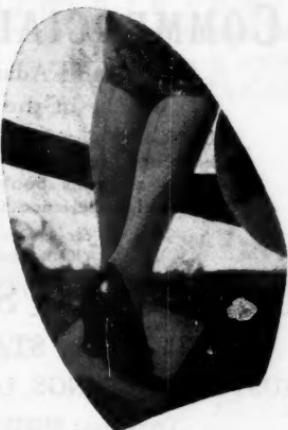
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Claire Clairmont

The Mother of Byron's Allegra

by R. Glynn Grylls

Author of "Mary Shelley: A Biography"

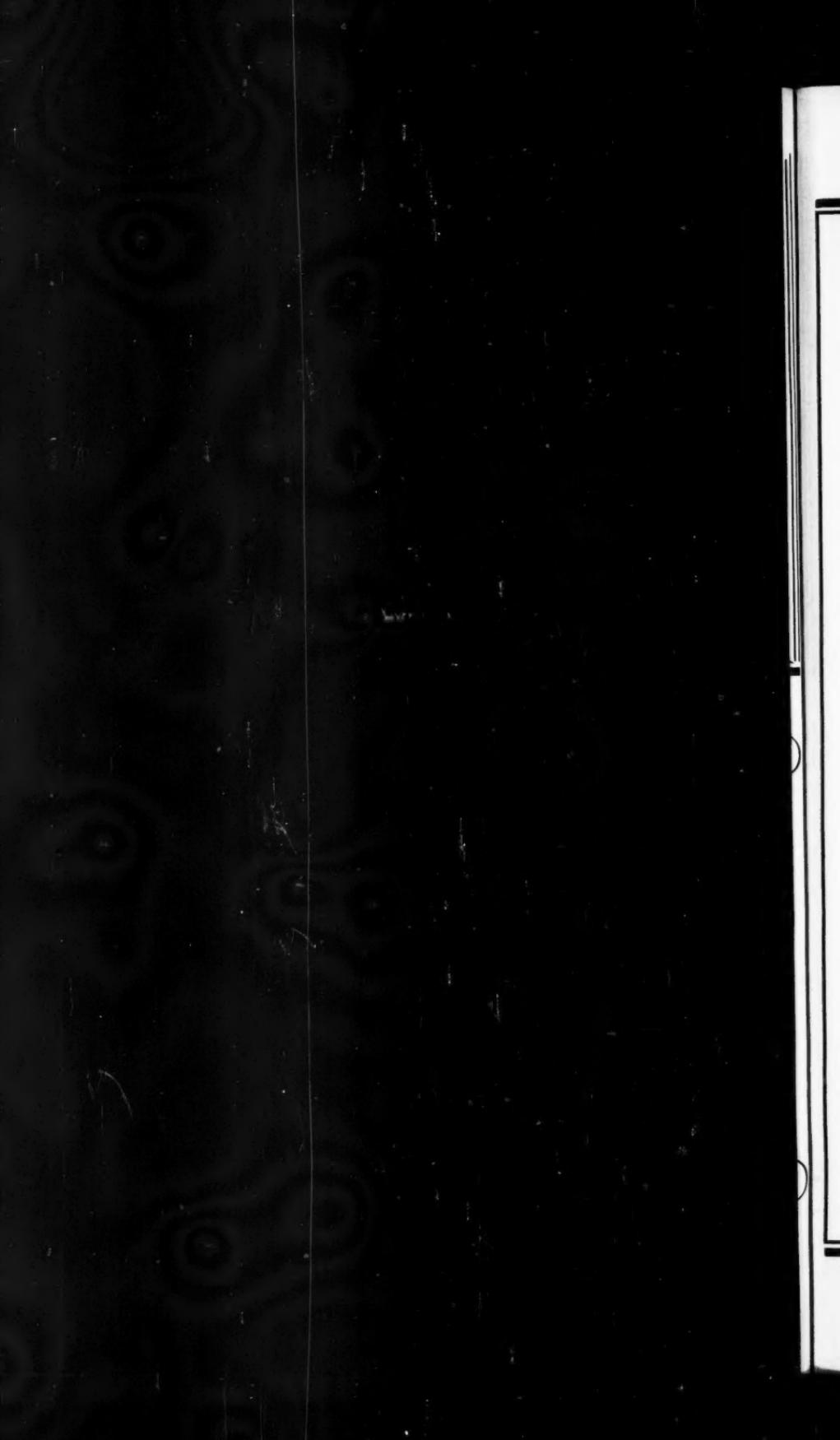
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different
benefits*

A good many people hesitate to take out an insurance policy because they cannot see ahead. They are afraid that circumstances may change. Their income may go down! They may not be able to pay the premiums! For such people the Friends' Provident and Century Life Office has devised a Ten Year Option Policy, the elastic nature of which provides a happy solution for the men whose requirements for the future cannot be foretold. Write for our leaflet in which this Option Policy is fully explained and practical examples given.

All classes of Insurance, including Fire, Accident, Employers' Liability and Continuous Disability are dealt with by the Century Insurance Company Limited (the whole of whose share capital is held by the Friends' Provident and Century Life Office).

THE FRIENDS' PROVIDENT AND CENTURY INSURANCE OFFICES

Aggregate Funds exceed £20,000,000

HEAD OFFICES :

7 Leadenhall Street, E.C.3. 18 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, 2

